A/71/12

United Nations

# Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

**Covering the period 1 July 2015-30 June 2016**

**General Assembly**
**Official Records**
**Seventy-first Session**
**Supplement No. 12 (A/71/12)**

Please recycle

United Nations

# Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Covering the period 1 July 2015–30 June 2016

General Assembly
Official Records
Seventy-First Session
Supplement No. 12 (A/71/12)

**General Assembly**
Official Records
Seventy-first Session
Supplement No. 12 (A/71/12)

# Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

## Covering the period 1 July 2015-30 June 2016

**United Nations • New York, 2016**

*Note*

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

ISSN 0251-8023

[22 August 2016]

# Contents


*Chapters*

| | | *Page* |
|---|---|---|
| I. | Introduction | 1 |
| II. | Operational overview | 1 |
| III. | Protection and solutions | 5 |
| IV. | Internal displacement | 9 |
| V. | Statelessness | 10 |
| VI. | New approaches to addressing forced displacement | 11 |
| VII. | Partnerships and coordination | 12 |
| VIII. | Contributions to UNHCR | 13 |
| IX. | Accountability and oversight | 14 |
| X. | Conclusion | 15 |

Tables

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. | Refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees (refugees and IDPs), stateless persons, and others of concern to UNHCR by country/territory of asylum, end-2015 | 16 |
| II. | UNHCR budget and expenditure in 2015 | 21 |

# I. Introduction

1. Over the past year, the number of people displaced by conflict and persecution continued to soar, reaching 65.3 million.[1] Of this number, 12.4 million were newly displaced. New emergencies, ongoing conflict and protracted crises in many parts of the world uprooted civilians, sometimes multiple times, and generated new waves of displacement of a complexity rarely seen before. Although host countries generally maintained open borders, demonstrating tremendous generosity towards those in need, they also bore significant political and socio-economic consequences.

2. Meanwhile, destitution in first countries of asylum, limited education and livelihood opportunities, and diminishing hope for political solutions, brought about despair for the displaced. Faced with increasing hardships in exile, many moved onwards. Travelling by dangerous and irregular means — often facilitated by smugglers — millions of people risked their lives in search of international protection elsewhere. The arrival of large numbers of refugees reaching countries in Europe by boat, together with migrants, drew the world's attention to their plight. While there was initially an outpouring of sympathy for the tragedy unfolding on Europe's shores, the situation quickly gave rise to anti-foreigner rhetoric and xenophobic attitudes in many countries. Exclusionary politics undermined the cooperation necessary to mitigate the crisis, threatening the institution of asylum.

3. As events over the past year confirmed, the current refugee and mixed migration challenges are too onerous and complex for individual countries to address alone. The developments underlined the need for greater and sustained support for countries of first asylum and intensified efforts to ensure that protection and timely solutions are available for all who need them. This includes strengthening financial support for countries hosting large numbers of refugees and creating additional pathways for admission as concrete expressions of responsibility sharing. In the current environment, international cooperation is needed more than ever before. While many focussed on events in Europe, most of today's refugees, or 86 per cent, continued to live in the developing world.

# II. Operational overview

## A. Regional highlights

4. Sub-Saharan Africa hosted the majority of refugees worldwide and continued to experience a significant number of simultaneous large-scale refugee crises. Recent emergencies in Burundi, the Central African Republic, Nigeria and South Sudan festered, and the conflict in Yemen had an impact on several countries in the region. Meanwhile, protracted conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Somalia and Sudan kept millions of people in exile. There were just under 19.4 million persons of concern to UNHCR in sub-Saharan Africa, including some 4.4 million refugees and close to 11 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). Many refugees and IDPs in Africa suffered from food insecurity, with levels of global acute malnutrition, stunting and anaemia on the rise. Obstacles to humanitarian access further exacerbated this, and food insecurity led to negative coping strategies in the most affected areas.

[1] This includes 21.3 million refugees (16.1 under UNHCR's mandate and 5.2 million Palestinian refugees registered by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency), 40.8 million internally displaced persons and 3.2 million asylum-seekers.

5. Violence and human rights abuses triggered by political unrest in Burundi forced 263,000 to flee across borders. Difficulties in preserving the civilian character of refugee camps and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) were two of the greatest challenges facing UNHCR and its partners. In the Central African Republic, the inauguration of a new President in March brought hope for peace and stability in the country, and with UNHCR's support, refugees in neighbouring countries took part in the elections. While the overall security situation remained fragile, triggering sporadic forced displacement, gradual returns were also observed, and more are expected during the second half of the year.

6. The conflict in Nigeria escalated, bringing the number of people displaced from their homes to over 2.7 million, including 2 million internally, more than 155,000 across borders, and hundreds of thousands within Cameroon, Chad and Niger due to cross-border insurgencies. In June 2016, UNHCR and the Government of Nigeria organized a ministerial protection dialogue, bringing together officials from the four Lake Chad Basin countries, as well as United Nations agencies, regional organizations, donor governments, and civil society to respond to the worrisome increase in protection incidents, including cases of refoulement. They agreed upon actions at the local, national and regional levels aimed at enhancing protection and outlined a roadmap for potential solutions to displacement. In South Sudan, conflict and food insecurity continued to trigger displacement and complicate an already life-threatening situation. Almost 870,000 South Sudanese fled to neighbouring countries, and nearly 1.7 million were displaced internally.

7. In the Americas, peace talks between the Colombian Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia dominated the political landscape. These efforts led to a specific agreement to a definitive ceasefire and the laying down of weapons reached in Havana in June 2016, which will be an integral part of the final peace agreement. The implementation of this agreement remains contingent on the successful conclusion of the negotiations, the signature of the final peace agreement and its approval through a referendum. In Colombia, more than 7.1 million people remained internally displaced, and over 340,000 were in exile. UNHCR advocated continued access to international protection in asylum countries, the voluntariness of return and solutions for refugees and IDPs. The earthquake in Ecuador in April 2016 claimed the lives of over 650 people, displaced 80,000 and affected some refugees and asylum-seekers, mostly from Colombia, who were living in the earthquake-affected areas. UNHCR airlifted humanitarian aid to support relief efforts in Ecuador.

8. The Asia and Pacific region was home to over 8.5 million persons of concern to UNHCR, including some 3.9 million refugees, 2.9 million IDPs and an estimated 1.5 million stateless individuals. The majority of the refugee population originated from Afghanistan and Myanmar. The long-standing tradition of refugee protection was largely upheld, despite the majority of countries in the region not having acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.

9. Afghan refugees remained one of the largest populations in a protracted situation worldwide. Of the 2.6 million Afghan refugees, 94 per cent were in the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan. Although Pakistan was, on record, the second-largest host country in the world, with 1.6 million registered refugees, it was also host to an estimated 1 million undocumented Afghans. During the second half of 2015, the situation in Afghanistan deteriorated, and increased levels of violence led to large-scale internal displacement and diminished humanitarian access. More than 340,000 Afghans were internally displaced as a result of the recent fighting, bringing the total number of IDPs to 1.2 million. Despite these challenges, UNHCR continued to work with Afghanistan's National Unity Government and partners to facilitate the reintegration of returning refugees and to assist IDPs. The international community also renewed its commitment to finding solutions to the Afghan

refugee situation during the high-level segment of the sixty-sixth session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme in October 2015.

10. In Myanmar, elections in November 2015 and the establishment of a new government in 2016 were milestones. This may pave the way for the eventual return of some of the 380,000 IDPs and over 450,000 refugees in the region, mainly in Thailand. UNHCR hopes that the positive political developments will also lead to a reduction in the large number of people risking their lives on dangerous boat journeys in South-East Asia.

11. Europe hosted nearly 4.4 million refugees — 1.3 million more than the previous year. The majority (57 per cent) were Syrians in Turkey. The region witnessed an increase in the number of refugees and migrants undertaking the dangerous journey across the Mediterranean. During 2015 and the first six months of 2016, more than 1.2 million people arrived on Europe's shores, mainly in Greece, but also in Italy and Spain. The majority came from conflict-affected countries, including some 45 per cent from the Syrian Arab Republic, 20 per cent from Afghanistan and 9 per cent from Iraq. Most moved onwards to Austria, Germany and Sweden, including approximately 90,000 separated and unaccompanied minors who filed asylum applications in European Union Member States. Despite enhanced rescue-at-sea efforts by the European Union and a number of States, some 6,300 people went missing, believed to have drowned.

12. Numerous countries responded to the crisis by imposing greater restrictions on access to their territories, testing the Common European Asylum System. Some saw their responsibilities as being limited to facilitating transit through their territories, while others closed borders, erected fences and passed restrictive legislation to dissuade arrivals, including criminalization of entry, detention and seizure of assets. UNHCR set out various proposals for effective, coordinated and collective action by European States to respond to the challenges in a protection-sensitive manner. In March 2016, the European Union and Turkey issued a statement on the situation, addressing the flow of persons from Turkey to Greece and envisaging the return to Turkey of certain categories of individuals. UNHCR was not a party to this agreement and called for protection safeguards to be put in place in both countries.

13. The conflict in Ukraine resulted in over 1.4 million persons seeking asylum or other forms of legal stay in other countries. While the Ukrainian authorities reported registration of more than 1.7 million IDPs, the 2016 inter-agency humanitarian response plan refers to between 800,000 and 1 million IDPs. The plan targets 2.5 million people in need in both government and non-government controlled areas in the east of the country. The situation in these areas remained volatile, with highly restricted freedom of movement across the "contact line". Humanitarian efforts were hampered by restrictions on access to certain areas, exacerbating the vulnerability of the population.

14. The Middle East and North Africa generated large-scale displacement over the past year. The region accounted for over 30 per cent of the global population of concern, including 2.7 million refugees, 13.9 million IDPs and more than 370,000 stateless individuals. In Iraq, the escalation of armed conflict resulted in significant displacement internally and externally. Executions, rape and other acts of violence were widespread, and human rights and the rule of law were undermined. Intensified conflict forced over 130,000 IDPs to flee Fallujah, Mosul and surrounding areas in May and June 2016. UNHCR and partners provided emergency shelter and humanitarian assistance to the displaced. However, the escalating needs, combined with serious funding shortfalls, stretched capacities. Worsening conditions and increased poverty for IDPs in Iraq forced many to resort to negative coping strategies and onward movements.

15. The conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic entered its sixth year and continued to trigger displacement, with the number of IDPs reaching 6.5 million. Despite the cessation

of hostilities agreed to in February 2016, safe and unimpeded access remained a challenge to ensuring humanitarian assistance for the estimated 13.5 million people in need. Nevertheless, UNHCR and its partners used all possible means to reach affected populations, working across conflict lines and borders. Some 3.2 million people were provided with relief items, including over 430,000 persons in more than 30 hard-to-reach locations and 469,000 through cross-border operations. With the number of Syrian refugees in the region exceeding 4.8 million, host countries continued to face enormous political, economic and security challenges, leading to stricter border management. To reduce the burden on these countries and promote international solidarity and responsibility sharing, UNHCR organized a ministerial-level meeting in March 2016 to explore complementary pathways for the admission of Syrian refugees. While some 200,000 places have been pledged to date, the level of international solidarity has largely failed to respond to the scale of the tragedy.

16. The escalation of conflict in Yemen in 2015 exacerbated the already dire humanitarian situation, with approximately 82 per cent of the population in need of assistance. The fighting resulted in massive internal displacement (over 2 million people), while over 178,000 moved to neighbouring countries or crossed the Gulf of Aden to the East and Horn of Africa. Peace talks and a partial cessation of hostilities since early April 2016 provided opportunities to deliver life-saving assistance, although many areas remained insecure and hard to reach. Notwithstanding the ongoing violence, Yemen hosted some 268,000 refugees and received more than 119,000 persons arriving in mixed movements. In Libya, conflict continued to impact more than 435,000 IDPs and some 100,000 refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR and partners provided assistance to the most vulnerable, though access remained challenging. Libya was a main transit and departure point for irregular migration from North Africa to Italy, with tens of thousands of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants falling victim to trafficking, abuse, arbitrary detention and exploitation.

## B. Emergency preparedness and response

17. UNHCR responded to four pre-existing system-wide level-3 emergencies in the Central African Republic, Iraq, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic, and one new one in Yemen, during the year. Five new internal UNHCR emergency declarations, covering refugee and internal displacement crises in 18 countries, also necessitated mobilization. The Office maintained global stockpiles in seven locations and the capacity to deploy aid to at least 600,000 people within 72 hours. More than 11,000 metric tons of relief items (including tents, solar lanterns, kitchen sets, mosquito nets, plastic sheets, blankets and jerry cans) were delivered by air, road and sea. The Office also maintained standby teams for deployment and arrangements with partners to send trained personnel to emergency operations. Some 470 emergency team leaders and experts in protection, shelter and site planning, water, sanitation and hygiene, information management and staff safety were deployed, including nearly 190 from standby partners. Of the total, some 95 were protection staff.

18. In response to the large number of arrivals in Europe, UNHCR and its partners launched a massive emergency response. Hundreds of staff and resources were deployed to 20 different locations in Croatia, Greece, Serbia, Slovenia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. They ensured the provision of emergency shelter and accommodation, registration, around-the-clock protection monitoring at the entry and exit points of all affected countries, the reunification of separated families and the identification of persons with specific needs (including separated and unaccompanied children). Nearly 2.5 million relief items were distributed, including blankets, hygiene kits, sleeping mats and

raincoats, and winterized reception facilities were established. Following the closure of borders by countries in the Western Balkans in March 2016, UNHCR shifted its resources to increase reception capacity and services for more than 57,000 asylum-seekers and refugees remaining in Greece.

19. UNHCR continued to strengthen its emergency preparedness capacity, including by prepositioning relief items closer to the point of delivery with the establishment of four regional warehouses (Djibouti, Greece, Serbia and Uganda). The Office also developed a diagnostic tool to assist concerned country operations in tracking their preparedness levels. In 2015, UNHCR issued a new digital emergency handbook, which provides staff and partners with up-to-date policies, operational guidelines and inter-agency tools.

# III. Protection and solutions

## A. The protection environment

20. Looking back over the past year, the scorecard on protection was mixed. The vast majority of the world's refugees were generously hosted in developing regions, by States neighbouring those mired in conflict. While these countries largely maintained open borders, despite severe social and economic implications, securing access to territory and protection further afield, especially in the context of mixed movements, became increasingly difficult. A number of countries took measures to restrict protection space and prevent people from accessing territory through physical, legal and administrative barriers. In some regions, a climate of fear fuelled acts of violence and prejudice, jeopardizing the safety and well-being of refugees and asylum-seekers. Detention was frequently used in response to the growing number of asylum claims. UNHCR continued to work with States in the framework of its global strategy, "Beyond detention (2014-2019)", to promote alternatives to detention, particularly for children and families.

21. In several parts of the world, serious security incidents resulted in the emergence of polarized discourse, with allusions to possible linkages between terrorism and movements of people made by some politicians and policy-makers without a factual or evidentiary basis. UNHCR shares the legitimate concern of States regarding the need to respond to possible security threats but maintains that security and protection are not mutually exclusive. In December 2015, UNHCR issued a "Note on addressing security concerns without undermining refugee protection". The note calls for an integrated approach to ensure that both goals are met, including through the proper application of those provisions in the 1951 Convention and other relevant instruments that enable States to manage security concerns, while maintaining refugee protection standards.

22. Some perceived the challenges resulting from the events over the past year as shortcomings in the 1951 Convention. Yet failures to abide by the principles outlined in the Convention were rather a reflection of the lack of political will. The Convention has saved countless lives over the past 65 years and has remained as relevant during the course of recent events as it was at its inception. It was the departures from international protection principles that resulted in the inadequate management of large-scale arrivals and the provocation of tensions with other States. Against this backdrop, strengthened implementation of refugee law principles and greater responsibility sharing in various forms are essential.

## B. Mixed movements and the need for greater international responsibility sharing

23. Large-scale mixed movements, including asylum-seekers and refugees, continued to affect all regions of the world. In South-East Asia, large numbers of migrants and refugees put their lives in the hands of smugglers in search of safety and a better life. Some 33,600 refugees and migrants embarked on such journeys and an estimated 370 people lost their lives, mainly from starvation, dehydration, disease and abuse at the hand of people smugglers. Thousands were reportedly abandoned by smugglers at sea, and mass graves were found along the land border between Malaysia and Thailand near the deserted camps of smugglers.

24. While overshadowed by crises elsewhere in the world, the situation in the Northern Triangle of Central America deteriorated. Rising levels of violence in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras displaced tens of thousands of people, forcing them to flee internally and to neighbouring countries, mainly Mexico, as well as onwards to the United States of America, in search of safety and protection. The number of asylum applications filed by individuals from this region had more than quadrupled since 2010 and stood at 55,000 by the end of 2015. Many of those fleeing faced sexual and gender-based violence and forced recruitment into criminal gangs, and were found to have a credible fear of persecution. UNHCR worked with States, civil society and partners in the region to put in place protection-sensitive responses, particularly in relation to the rising number of unaccompanied children.

25. In the Middle East and North Africa region, movements across the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, as well as from North Africa across the Mediterranean to Europe, continued. The scale of movements by sea from Libya grew exponentially, with more than 127,000 people risking their lives to reach Europe. The Valletta Summit on Migration held in Malta in November 2015 resulted in an action plan and emergency fund to address the root causes of mixed movements in the region.

26. Inadequate protection, uneven access to education and employment opportunities, and a lack of available solutions were often behind these irregular movements. In his report to the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants (A/70/59), the Secretary-General called for global commitments to ensure the human rights, safety and dignity of refugees and migrants, address the root causes of such movements, protect those who are compelled to undertake dangerous journeys, including by sea, and prevent discrimination and xenophobia.

27. The Secretary-General proposed the adoption of a global compact on responsibility sharing for refugees in order to ensure that the impact of their flight is not disproportionately borne by some countries and regions, because of their proximity to countries of origin. The report called on UNHCR to initiate and coordinate a comprehensive response plan, which would assist States in meeting their commitments under the global compact. The plan would include measures to relieve the pressure on host countries, support voluntary repatriation and expand pathways for admission to other countries.

## C. Voluntary repatriation

28. Voluntary repatriation remained impossible for the majority of the world's refugees. In 2015, an estimated 200,000 people were able to access this solution. While this was a modest increase compared to 2014 (when some 126,000 returned), it represented the third-lowest level of refugee returns in the past 20 years. The largest numbers of returns

were to Afghanistan (61,400), Sudan (39,500), Somalia (32,300) and the Central African Republic (21,600).

29. The main challenges to return were conflict, persecution, ethnic violence, human rights violations and the absence of the rule of law. Other obstacles included the loss of livelihoods, lack of access to health care and education, and difficulties in reclaiming land and property. Sustainable return is contingent on addressing the root causes of displacement, which was the theme of the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges in December 2015. The Dialogue analysed the triggers of conflict-related displacement and promoted collaboration among political, humanitarian and development actors to address the obstacles to return.

30. Despite these challenges, UNHCR identified opportunities in a number of operations to promote the conditions conducive to return. In the Central African Republic, UNHCR worked with the Government and partners to resolve housing, land and property issues. In Colombia, UNHCR and UNDP supported the development of a comprehensive transitional solutions strategy aimed at making return possible for hundreds of thousands of refugees in the region. With respect to Myanmar, UNHCR coordinated multi-stakeholder consultations, including with refugees, to determine the greatest needs in return areas. The pilot project to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from Kenya was also expanded to extend support to refugees wishing to return to areas not previously covered. In October 2015, UNHCR and the European Union co-hosted a pledging conference aimed at generating commitments towards the reintegration of Somali refugees. In May 2016, the Government of Kenya reiterated its intention to close the Dadaab refugee camps. It subsequently clarified, however, that any returns would be voluntary in accordance with the tripartite agreement signed with the Government of Somalia and UNHCR, and that Kenya would continue to honour its obligations towards refugees under national and international law.

## D. Resettlement and other pathways for humanitarian admission

31. With other solutions being out of reach for the majority of the world's refugees, resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes gained momentum. Over the past year, several countries increased their engagement in this area, including important new contributions from long-standing resettlement countries and efforts made by States that had traditionally not taken part in global resettlement efforts. Thirty-three States offered resettlement or humanitarian admission in 2015, compared with 27 in 2014. The Solidarity Resettlement Programme established by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, was an example of regional collaboration to enhance resettlement opportunities within the framework of the 2014 Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action. Meanwhile, owing to the deteriorating situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, Australia, Canada, Norway, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America increased their annual quotas to accommodate more Syrian refugees.

32. Resettlement continued to play a crucial role in UNHCR's protection response to forced displacement. Women and girls at risk were prioritized, with around 12 per cent of resettlement submissions falling within this category for the fifth consecutive year, exceeding UNHCR's objective by 2 per cent. In 2015, UNHCR processed more than 134,000 submissions, increasing from close to 104,000 the previous year. Within four years, UNHCR's annual submissions rose by 79 per cent, requiring UNHCR to significantly enhance its response capacity. Despite these advances, the gap between places available and the needs — estimated at more than 1 million — continued to grow.

33. Beyond traditional resettlement programmes, UNHCR has called for the international community to expand complementary pathways for admission, including family reunification, private sponsorships, medical evacuation, student visas and scholarships, and labour mobility schemes. Such programmes can help relieve the strain on host countries and serve as an important form of international responsibility sharing. This was the objective of the March 2016 ministerial-level meeting organized by UNHCR on global responsibility sharing through pathways for admission of Syrian refugees. UNHCR is working with States and partners in all regions to promote complementary pathways and is developing guidelines for staff to enable them to support such endeavours. Efforts are already underway with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) to explore ways to include refugees in schemes that promote free movement and labour.

## E. Local integration

34. In the context of comprehensive solutions strategies, UNHCR considers all solutions, including local integration. UNHCR continued to work with governments and relevant stakeholders to facilitate local solutions for Angolan and Rwandan refugees, with support from the international community. In September 2015, the Government of Zambia approved expanded criteria for the local integration of all former Angolan refugees who arrived in the country before 2003, as well as for some 4,000 Rwandans. The Tanzanian Government issued citizenship certificates to over 151,000 former Burundian refugees as part of a multi-partner comprehensive solutions strategy, and nearly 50,000 people were in the process of obtaining their citizenship. An integration strategy is being implemented for these individuals. In West Africa, some countries are exploring how the ECOWAS framework can complement national laws in offering permanent residency and, in some cases, naturalization.

## F. Specific needs

35. UNHCR's work continued to be guided by its age, gender and diversity policy, which aims to ensure that all people of concern, regardless of age, sexual orientation or gender identity, disability, or belonging to a minority group, have equal access to protection and assistance, and that they are able to participate in the decisions that affect their lives. Although UNHCR and partners endeavoured to reduce barriers for persons of concern with disabilities to access services and assistance, the identification of these individuals and their participation remained a challenge. In response, UNHCR began strengthening the collection of disability-related information during registration, enabling the Office and its partners to better target this group. Efforts were also made to address the needs of older persons, including by employing mobile health teams and providing transport to health centres in a number of operations.

36. Improving gender equality, eliminating gender-based discrimination and empowering displaced women and girls, including through their meaningful participation in decision-making processes, are vital to the creation of safe environments. Under UNHCR's global strategic priority on community empowerment and self-reliance, 53 per cent of the concerned operations recorded an increase in the participation of women in leadership and management structures. UNHCR began working to revise its five commitments to refugee women, based on the outcomes of a gender equality review undertaken in some 70 operations around the world.

37. Over the past year, progress was made by many operations in responding effectively to and preventing SGBV, with more than 40 developing and implementing strategies in this

area. Through the "safe from the start initiative", UNHCR was able to deploy senior SGBV experts to more than 10 operations to provide technical assistance at the onset of emergencies. UNHCR also helped shape the content of revised Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) "Guidelines for integrating gender-based violence interventions in humanitarian action". The guidelines were designed to promote actions across sectors that help prevent and mitigate sexual and other forms of violence, not only against women and girls but also against other groups at risk.

38. Traditionally, humanitarian efforts have not paid sufficient attention to the specific needs of youth and the heightened protection risks they face. Following up on a number of initiatives taken in recent years to review UNHCR's engagement with displaced youth, the Office began strengthening support for this population, including through the appointment of dedicated staff and various advocacy initiatives. Together with the Women's Refugee Commission, UNHCR initiated a global refugee youth consultations process to develop guidelines and policy recommendations on youth-inclusive protection programming.

39. Redoubling efforts to ensure safe access to education and to expand the availability and impact of educational opportunities for persons of concern were priorities for UNHCR. Enrolment rates of displaced children in primary school increased in 56 operations. Specific measures were also taken to increase the level of school attendance by girls and to ensure their retention, including by recruiting female teachers and employing measures to prevent SGBV. Challenges included the costs of schooling, discrimination, inadequate infrastructure, unqualified teaching staff, lack of access to sanitary materials, and early and forced marriages. Sustainable Development Goal 4, which seeks education for all by 2030, represents a critical window of opportunity to ensure that refugees and stateless children and youth are accounted for in national education sector planning.

## IV. Internal displacement

40. The number of people internally displaced by conflict and violence stood at an estimated 40.8 million by the end of 2015, the highest figure on record and an increase of 2.6 million from the previous year. The increase was largely driven by the persistent turmoil in the Middle East, with Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen accounting for more than half of all new internal displacements, while large internal displacement situations in Afghanistan, Colombia and in different parts of Africa remained unresolved. Over the past year, UNHCR provided protection and assistance to some 37.5 million IDPs in 28 countries — a more than five-fold increase in the number of IDPs supported by UNHCR since the introduction in 2006 of the IASC cluster system.

41. UNHCR continued to provide global leadership for the protection, shelter, and camp coordination and camp management clusters. The global protection cluster updated its "Strategic framework for 2016-2019", which guides the priorities and work of the cluster and, in particular, promotes the centrality of protection in humanitarian action. In the field, UNHCR led 22 out of 28 protection clusters worldwide and co-facilitated several others with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and a number of governments. In follow-up to the "Whole of system review", commissioned by the Norwegian Refugee Council on behalf of the IASC and the global protection cluster, UNHCR led the latter in developing a comprehensive policy framework on protection, with a view to strengthening the response of IASC members.

42. Together with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, UNHCR co-led the global shelter cluster, which supported 25 country-level clusters, reaching 16.2 million persons in need of shelter and non-food items. UNHCR led 11 out of these 25 country-level clusters and co-facilitated several with the International

Organization for Migration (IOM) and other partners. The global camp coordination and camp management cluster, co-led by UNHCR and IOM, supported 37 field-level clusters worldwide.

## V. Statelessness

43. According to country-level data available in 78 countries, some 3.7 million persons were recorded as being stateless in 2015. However, UNHCR estimated the global stateless population to be at least 10 million people. Collecting comprehensive data on stateless populations remained a challenge. To address this, UNHCR supported new studies and surveys in 13 countries. November 2015 marked the first anniversary since UNHCR's campaign to end statelessness in 10 years was launched. Robust global support for the campaign was achieved, and joint efforts with partners produced results in laying the foundation for the resolution of a number of protracted statelessness situations. In the context of the campaign's focus on childhood statelessness during the first two years, UNHCR conducted consultations with more than 250 stateless children and youth in seven countries around the world. Their experiences were highlighted in a special report entitled, "I am here, I belong: The urgent need to end childhood statelessness", which recommends actions to resolve and prevent childhood statelessness.

44. Globally, at least 49,100 stateless people or those with undetermined nationality acquired a nationality or had their nationality confirmed. Collaboration with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire enabled over 2,000 stateless individuals to acquire nationality. In Central Asia, UNHCR's work with governments and NGOs enabled the identification and resolution of thousands of cases of statelessness. In Thailand, cooperation with the Government and partners, working with stateless communities, resulted in the granting of nationality to more than 18,000 individuals over the last three years. In the Dominican Republic, the authorities confirmed that several thousand individuals previously deprived of their nationality were considered nationals, and they were issued civil registration documents. UNHCR maintained strong partnerships to facilitate birth registration aimed at preventing statelessness, including in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia and Kenya. Work was also undertaken by governments, UNHCR and partners in the countries neighbouring the Syrian Arab Republic to facilitate and improve birth registration for children born to Syrian refugees.

45. Several regional initiatives served as avenues for achieving progress. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted in August 2015 a draft protocol on the right to nationality in Africa — an additional protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights — which aims to eradicate statelessness on the continent. The protocol is expected to be adopted by African Union Member States in 2017. The Council of the European Union passed its first conclusions on statelessness in December 2015, welcoming UNHCR's campaign and inviting the European Commission to facilitate the exchange of good practices among Member States. A regional workshop for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on the right to a nationality and birth registration facilitated the exchange of good practices. In the Americas, progress was also made under the Brazil Plan of Action.

46. The number of States parties to the statelessness conventions continued to increase, with accessions by Belize, Italy, Mali and Sierra Leone. This brought the number of States parties to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons to 88 and to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness to 67. Belarus, Costa Rica and Tajikistan adopted new nationality legislation to enhance the prevention of statelessness and protection of stateless persons.

# VI. New approaches to addressing forced displacement

47. Over the past year, only 340,000 refugees found a solution by going home, resettling in another country or integrating in their country of asylum. For every refugee who found a solution in 2015, five new people became a refugee. Some 6.7 million refugees were in a protracted situation by the end of 2015. Against this background, new development-oriented approaches to addressing forced displacement were needed. This would mean providing refugees with the skills that allow them to prosper during their time in exile, whatever solution becomes available; allowing them to contribute to the economic growth of their host countries; and including them in national service delivery systems to reduce reliance on humanitarian aid.

48. While UNHCR has promoted the engagement of development partners in displacement situations for decades, progress has been slow. Recent events, however, have heightened attention on the humanitarian-development nexus, creating momentum and new coalitions. A number of initiatives over the past year have provided an opportunity for new thinking and for developing a critical bridge between humanitarian assistance and development programming. The Wilton Park "Forum on new approaches to protracted forced displacement, informed the debate by highlighting core elements of a new approach and emphasizing the need to: work through national and local systems; support host communities and build social cohesion; enable economic participation and stimulate growth; provide innovative financing; and improve the data and evidence base. The "London conference on supporting Syria and the region" was also reflective of this trend. The Solutions Alliance, currently chaired by UNHCR, remains a promising platform for action, particularly in the context of new multi-stakeholder national groups which are active in Somalia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

49. UNHCR strengthened strategic partnerships with development actors and international financial institutions. In particular, there has been a deepening of collaboration with the World Bank, which draws on complementarities to address the root causes of and solutions to forced displacement, and builds the evidence base related to the economic impact of refugees on host economies. Cooperation includes enhanced policy dialogue, technical staff exchange, joint missions and a number of regional projects and studies. In June 2016, UNHCR signed an agreement with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and updated an agreement with the International Labour Organization to strengthen collaboration on promoting access to labour markets and livelihood opportunities.

50. Internally, UNHCR is changing the way it operates to seize these new opportunities. Through its policy on alternatives to camps and its global strategies for public health, education, settlement and shelter, and livelihoods, the Office is pursuing more holistic approaches that foster humanitarian-development synergies and build the resilience of refugees, while also benefiting host communities. UNHCR is working to mainstream refugees within national and local service delivery systems and to promote programming that takes into consideration local communities, services, markets and infrastructure. Despite these advances, a shift to longer-term perspectives and engagements is needed. UNHCR's "seeds for solutions" initiative provided a testing ground for moving towards multi-year, multi-partner planning. In 2015, it supported more than 20 operations with financial and technical support to carry out solutions-oriented interventions.

51. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals adopted in September 2015 — which aim to "leave no one behind" — provide an important platform for including refugees and other forcibly displaced persons in national and local strategies aimed at building economic growth and addressing a range of social needs, including education, health and job opportunities. UNHCR also contributed to the

preparation of the United Nations General Assembly summit on refugees and migrants, and the leaders' refugee summit organized by the United States of America, on 19 and 20 September respectively.

## VII. Partnerships and coordination

52. UNHCR remained committed to effective coordination, planning and delivery with partners, based on the "principles of partnership" adopted by the Global Humanitarian Platform in 2007. Over the past year, UNHCR entrusted US$ 1.2 billion to 938 partners (584 national NGOs, 168 international NGOs and 172 governmental partners and 14 United Nations agencies) to provide protection and assistance for persons of concern and to help find solutions for them. The funds channelled to partners represented 38 per cent of UNHCR's annual expenditure (US$ 3.3 billion). National and local organizations were critical in helping UNHCR carry out its mandate in many countries. UNHCR's annual consultations with NGOs provided a platform for dialogue and the exchange of best practices. The 2016 consultations, which highlighted the theme of youth, involved a record number of 300 organizations, including more than 160 national NGOs from 90 countries.

53. In 2015, the Office launched a Partner Portal to help support its "Framework for implementing with partners". This tool enhances communication with partners and provides them with access to an array of resources, including an overview of project-level collaboration, up-to-date information on disbursements, and policies and guidance. UNHCR undertook consultations with NGO partners on the framework, with a view to reviewing policies and procedures to strengthen partnerships and the effectiveness of humanitarian response. Fourteen workshops, involving more than 480 aid workers, were organized, offering an opportunity to strengthen dialogue and receive feedback on the framework.

54. The World Food Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund remained two of UNHCR's most important partners. In October 2015, a commitment was reached to strengthen collaboration with these agencies on cash-based interventions.

55. UNHCR continued to work within established coordination arrangements at global and field levels, under the IASC. Efforts to strengthen humanitarian response and accountability were guided by the Transformative Agenda. The "Joint note on mixed situations: coordination in practice," developed with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, provided the framework for leadership and coordination in mixed internal displacement and refugee situations, such as in Cameroon. UNHCR refined its refugee coordination model through a series of stock-taking exercises across functional areas to bring it in line with operational needs. Implementation of these tools included the development of technical guidance, capacity-building for field staff and the provision of direct support through field missions.

56. The World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul in May 2016, provided an important platform for engaging with a wide range of partners on measures to improve humanitarian action and ensure better responses to forced displacement. UNHCR contributed to the Secretary-General's report, "One Humanity: Shared Responsibility" (A/70/709) and to the thematic and regional consultations in preparation for the Summit. Through these initiatives, UNHCR advocated the centrality of protection, emphasizing that protection concerns must systematically inform humanitarian planning and preparedness, decision-making and responses, financing and solutions, and leadership and coordination. The Office also called for greater attention to solutions to protracted situations and efforts to bridge the humanitarian-development divide, and highlighted the importance of innovation to improving delivery and gaining efficiencies. At the Summit, UNHCR made a

number of commitments, including facilitating faster and more efficient emergency response, building a robust capacity to engage effectively with development actors and scaling up the use of cash assistance, where appropriate. It also committed to greater efficiency, transparency and accountability.

## VIII. Contributions to UNHCR

57. Host countries continued to make critical contributions to refugee protection and assistance. Developing regions hosted 13.9 million of the world's total refugee population (or 86 per cent), compared with the 2.2 million hosted by developed regions. States neighbouring those mired in conflict were disproportionally affected. The least developed countries — those least able to meet the developmental needs of their own citizens, let alone the humanitarian needs of refugee populations — provided asylum to over 4 million refugees. Half of the top 10 refugee hosting countries — Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Sudan — were located in sub-Saharan Africa. With respect to the Syria crisis, just five countries — Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey — shouldered the responsibility of hosting over nine tenths of all refugees. Other countries received and hosted in numbers that were smaller in absolute terms, but which, nonetheless, tested the capacity of national reception and asylum systems and host communities. These host countries saved countless lives and their contributions must be recognized. Their efforts highlight the imperative for the international community to share responsibilities, and to support and reinforce national capacities.

58. UNHCR's 2015 annual budget amounted to US$ 7,232.4 million,[2] comprising an initial budget of US$ 6,234.4 million approved by the Executive Committee in October 2014 and US$ 1,156.4 million for 10 supplementary budgets created to address unforeseen emergency needs, less a reduction of US$ 158.4 million for the Syria situation, following a revision of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan and the Strategic Response Plan. The Office continued to receive strong financial support from donors; voluntary contributions in 2015 reached US$ 3,361.0 million, and total available funds amounted to US$ 3,706.8 million. Despite this, 49 per cent of UNHCR's 2015 comprehensive budgetary requirements were not covered, amounting to US$ 3,525.6 million. As of the end of June 2016, the Office's 2016 annual budget stood at US$ 7,184.7 million, comprising an initial budget of US$ 6,546.3 million approved by the Executive Committee in October 2015 and US$ 676.8 million in supplementary budgets, together with a decrease of $38.4 million for the Africa region due to a reduction in population figures in Chad. As of end June 2016, US$ 2,384.6 million in voluntary contributions was received.

59. UNHCR continued to make steady progress in diversifying its sources of income. The Office's top 10 donors provided 77 per cent of its funding in 2015, compared to 82 per cent the year before, and governmental and inter-governmental sources provided 88 per cent of its funds, compared to 91 per cent in 2014. In 2015, UNHCR received US$ 284 million from private donors, almost half of which was fully unearmarked. While the Office's funding gap was greater than ever before, private donations allowed UNHCR to be more responsive to a number of underfunded situations and had a significant impact on the well-being of millions of people. For the refugee crisis in Europe, UNHCR raised more than US$ 50 million from the private sector.

[2] Table 2 shows a breakdown of the 2015 annual budget by region and pillar.

# IX. Accountability and oversight

60. In view of the Office's growing budget, UNHCR continued to implement institutional measures to strengthen oversight and accountability. This included strengthening accountability mechanisms and following up on the recommendations of various internal and external oversight bodies.

61. In line with its strategy of bringing oversight capacity closer to the field, the Inspector General's Office opened up a field unit in Nairobi. This complements one already existing in Bangkok. The Inspector General's Office also developed a new communications strategy, which seeks to provide transparent information on its mandate, recommendations and compliance mechanisms, and to reinforce trust in its processes.[3]

62. The Office started to implement an organization-wide risk management framework. A corporate risk register was compiled, providing structured information on risks and mitigation measures in the field and at the Headquarters. A strategic risk register was also created, capturing critical risks affecting the entire organization. In October 2015, UNHCR established an online platform to maintain its risk registers. The Office continued to improve the integration of risk management within its planning and management processes.

63. The Independent Audit and Oversight Committee continued to assist the High Commissioner and the Executive Committee in exercising their oversight responsibilities. The Committee made recommendations on various issues, including audit, oversight mechanisms, inspection and investigation, evaluation, fraud prevention, personal accountability, human resources, procurement, ethics and enterprise risk management.

64. The United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) performed UNHCR's internal audit function. Aside from conducting internal audits of various operations and regional representations, OIOS reviewed thematic areas, including cash-based interventions, asset and inventory management, and the partner personnel costs and procurement.

65. UNHCR continued to strive towards a comprehensive approach to fraud prevention. It began developing a fraud awareness e-learning programme and a fraud prevention manual, which were noted as positive steps by the Board of Auditors.

66. With close to one third of its budget expended through partners, UNHCR focused on strengthening project control and oversight of its operational partnership management. Within its "Framework for implementing with partners", UNHCR applied a risk-based audit approach in relation to projects carried out by partners.

67. UNHCR's Ethics Office continued to promote an organizational culture of respect, transparency, fairness and accountability. In 2015, it provided support to UNHCR's workforce in 126 field offices and provided advice on over 160 individual cases of ethics-related questions. The Ethics Office managed a financial disclosure programme involving nearly 1,500 staff members and achieved a 99 per cent compliance rate.

68. Following the appointment by the Secretary-General of a Special Coordinator to improve the United Nations response to incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel, several initiatives were undertaken at both the inter-agency level and within UNHCR. UNHCR's Ethics Office, working in consultation with a number of field offices, the Inspector General's Office, relevant divisions at Headquarters and the IASC, finalized a training manual on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. A technical coordination team was formed to strengthen support to country operations on prevention

[3] More information on the work of the Inspector General's Office may be found in A/AC.96/1160.

measures. UNHCR's zero tolerance policy was also reinforced, with a call on senior management to ensure training, intensify awareness-raising for staff, partners and persons of concern, and nominate focal points responsible for liaising with the Ethics Office on these matters.

## X. Conclusion

69. Despite the challenges presented by growing forced displacement and mixed movements, the past year has provided opportunities to change the public discourse about refugees and to generate positive dynamism around issues that UNHCR has been working on for decades. Rarely before has the issue of refugees been so squarely in the spotlight. We must take advantage of the centrality of refugees in the current debate and leverage more support to address their plight. We must find humane and dignified ways to ensure that those fleeing conflict and persecution do not have to risk their lives and those of their families by resorting to ruthless traffickers and boarding unseaworthy vessels in an attempt to reach safety and a better future.

70. To meet the challenges ahead, UNHCR will focus on a number of strategic directions that will guide its work over the coming years. The Office will, first and foremost, redouble its efforts to find solutions for people of concern. This means working creatively to create the conditions for voluntary repatriation, even when return is not yet an option. It also means engaging development actors in a meaningful way to stabilize countries emerging from conflict, to lay the groundwork to end protracted displacement through new approaches, and to ensure that when returns take place they are sustainable. UNHCR will also strengthen its engagement with IDPs to help address growing internal displacement and reinforce its emergency response capacity through innovation and strategic partnerships.

71. At the same time, there is a pressing imperative for the international community to address the root causes of forced displacement and the protection needs that arise from it. We call on the international community to uphold international protection principles and respect the institution of asylum, to make investments in solutions and support innovative approaches to address forced displacement, to reduce the disproportionate burden borne by a limited number of States by providing opportunities for people in need of protection to access it through safe avenues, and to ensure greater and more sustained support to host countries. This is a watershed moment for the refugee cause — an opportunity to take collective action to address forced displacement. Ensuring that no one is left behind must become a reality. This past year has been one of brainstorming and commitments. Next year must be one of cooperation and action.

# Table 1

## Refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees (refugees and IDPs), stateless persons, and others of concern to UNHCR by country/territory of asylum, end-2015

All data are provisional and subject to change.

| Country/territory of asylum[1] | REFUGEES | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Refugees[2] | People in refugee-like situations[3] | Total refugees and people in refugee-like situations | Of whom assisted by UNHCR | Asylum-seekers (pending cases)[4] | Returned refugees[5] | IDPs protected/ assisted by UNHCR, incl. people in IDP-like situations[6] | Returned IDPs[7] | Persons under UNHCR's statelessness mandate[8] | Others of concern to UNHCR[9] | Total population of concern |
| Afghanistan | 237'069 | 20'485 | 257'554 | 257'554 | 62 | 61'379 | 1'174'306 | 123'653 | | 150'317 | 1'767'291 |
| Albania | 104 | - | 104 | 104 | 830 | - | - | - | 7'442 | - | 8'376 |
| Algeria[10] | 94'182 | - | 94'182 | 90'177 | 6'593 | - | - | - | - | - | 100'775 |
| Angola | 15'595 | - | 15'555 | 288 | 30'143 | 4'639 | - | - | - | - | 50'337 |
| Anguilla | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Antigua and Barbuda | 15 | - | 15 | 15 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 15 |
| Argentina | 3'207 | - | 3'207 | 185 | 1'077 | - | - | - | - | - | 4'284 |
| Armenia | 3'319 | 16'000 | 19'319 | 7'506 | 68 | - | - | - | 311 | - | 19'698 |
| Aruba | 2 | - | 2 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| Australia[11] | 36'917 | - | 36'917 | - | 20'677 | - | - | - | - | - | 57'594 |
| Austria | 72'216 | - | 72'216 | - | 80'075 | - | - | - | 828 | - | 153'119 |
| Azerbaijan | 1'278 | - | 1'278 | 1'278 | 220 | - | 618'220 | - | 3'585 | - | 623'303 |
| Bahamas | 8 | - | 8 | 8 | 21 | - | - | - | - | 86 | 115 |
| Bahrain | 247 | - | 247 | 247 | 113 | - | - | - | - | - | 360 |
| Bangladesh[12] | 31'958 | 200'000 | 231'958 | 31'958 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 231'958 |
| Barbados | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Belarus | 1'909 | - | 1'909 | 781 | 279 | - | - | - | 5'635 | - | 7'723 |
| Belgium | 35'314 | - | 35'314 | - | 38'009 | - | - | - | 5'776 | - | 77'099 |
| Belize | 35 | - | 35 | 35 | 720 | - | - | - | - | 57 | 812 |
| Benin | 530 | - | 530 | 530 | 178 | - | - | - | - | - | 708 |
| Bolivia (Plurinational State of) | 775 | - | 775 | 154 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 775 |
| Bonaire, Saint Eustatius and Saba | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 6'788 | - | 6'788 | 6'788 | 23 | 22 | 98'324 | - | 58 | 52'437 | 157'652 |
| Botswana | 2'130 | - | 2'130 | 2'130 | 135 | - | - | - | - | - | 2'265 |
| Brazil | 8'707 | - | 8'707 | 1'783 | 20'815 | - | - | - | 4 | 8'264 | 35'790 |
| British Virgin Islands | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Brunei Darussalam | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 20'524 | - | 20'524 |
| Bulgaria | 19'557 | - | 19'557 | 19'557 | 9'499 | - | - | - | 67 | - | 29'123 |
| Burkina Faso | 34'017 | - | 34'017 | 34'017 | 143 | - | - | - | - | - | 34'160 |
| Burundi | 53'363 | - | 53'363 | 53'363 | 2'931 | 14 | 25'000 | 1'144 | 1'302 | 645 | 84'399 |
| Cabo Verde | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 115 | - | 115 |
| Cambodia | 76 | - | 76 | 71 | 27 | 1 | - | - | - | 197 | 301 |
| Cameroon | 327'121 | 15'852 | 342'973 | 342'973 | 5'373 | - | 92'657 | 18'836 | - | 11 | 459'850 |
| Canada | 135'888 | - | 135'888 | - | 19'642 | - | - | - | - | - | 155'530 |
| Cayman Islands | 12 | - | 12 | 8 | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | 16 |
| Central African Rep. | 7'330 | - | 7'330 | 6'581 | 334 | 21'832 | 216'392 | 258'276 | - | - | 503'964 |
| Chad | 369'540 | - | 369'540 | 369'340 | 2'898 | 41 | 51'999 | - | - | 50'000 | 474'478 |
| Chile | 1'849 | - | 1'849 | 93 | 1'064 | - | - | - | - | - | 2'913 |
| China[13] | 301'052 | - | 301'052 | 157 | 677 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 301'731 |
| China, Hong Kong SAR | 133 | - | 133 | 133 | 2'315 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2'449 |
| China, Macao SAR | - | - | - | - | 7 | - | - | - | - | - | 7 |
| Colombia | 226 | - | 226 | 51 | 115 | 1'792 | 6'939'907 | - | 12 | - | 6'941'212 |
| Comoros | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Congo, Republic of | 44'955 | - | 44'955 | 44'955 | 6'342 | 1 | - | - | - | 2'854 | 52'152 |
| Costa Rica | 3'616 | - | 3'616 | 3'616 | 3'283 | - | - | - | 1'806 | - | 8'705 |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 1'980 | - | 1'980 | 1'980 | 649 | 12'222 | 308'272 | 399 | 700'000 | 57 | 1'023'579 |
| Croatia | 388 | 214 | 522 | 522 | 53 | 113 | - | - | 2'873 | 14'070 | 17'631 |
| Cuba | 303 | - | 303 | 186 | 25 | - | - | - | - | - | 328 |
| Curaçao | 48 | - | 48 | 48 | 30 | - | - | - | - | - | 78 |
| Cyprus[14] | 7'067 | - | 7'067 | 477 | 2'252 | - | - | - | - | 6'000 | 15'319 |
| Czech Rep. | 3'644 | - | 3'644 | - | 859 | - | - | - | 1'502 | - | 5'805 |
| Dem. Rep. of the Congo[15] | 383'095 | - | 383'095 | 273'043 | 983 | 9'536 | 1'555'112 | 736'837 | - | 14'474 | 2'699'037 |
| Denmark | 27'328 | - | 27'328 | - | 2'948 | - | - | - | 6'580 | - | 36'854 |
| Djibouti | 19'365 | - | 19'365 | 19'365 | 2'641 | - | - | - | - | - | 22'006 |
| Dominica | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Dominican Rep.[16] | 615 | - | 615 | 615 | 758 | - | - | - | 133'770 | - | 135'143 |
| Ecuador[17] | 53'191 | 68'344 | 121'535 | - | 11'583 | - | - | - | - | - | 133'118 |
| Egypt | 212'500 | - | 212'500 | 142'500 | 36'171 | 4 | - | - | 22 | - | 250'697 |
| El Salvador | 48 | - | 48 | 31 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 10'100 | 10'149 |
| Equatorial Guinea | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Eritrea | 2'549 | - | 2'549 | 2'549 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 6 | 2'557 |
| Estonia[18] | 168 | - | 168 | - | 68 | - | - | - | 85'301 | - | 85'555 |
| Ethiopia | 736'086 | - | 736'086 | 736'086 | 2'131 | 5 | - | - | - | 994 | 739'156 |
| Fiji | 12 | - | 12 | 12 | 8 | - | - | - | - | - | 20 |
| Finland | 12'703 | - | 12'703 | - | 24'386 | - | - | - | 2'427 | - | 39'496 |
| France | 273'126 | - | 273'126 | - | 63'057 | - | - | - | 1'326 | - | 337'509 |
| Gabon | 943 | - | 943 | 943 | 1'941 | - | - | - | - | - | 2'884 |

| Country/territory of asylum[1] | REFUGEES: Refugees[2] | People in refugee-like situations[3] | Total refugees and people in refugee-like situations | Of whom assisted by UNHCR | Asylum-seekers (pending cases)[4] | Returned refugees[5] | IDPs protected/ assisted by UNHCR, incl. people in IDP-like situations[6] | Returned IDPs[7] | Persons under UNHCR's statelessness mandate[8] | Others of concern to UNHCR[9] | Total population of concern |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gambia | 7'854 | - | 7'854 | 7'854 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 7'854 |
| Georgia | 1'300 | 679 | 1'979 | 1'979 | 733 | - | 26'416 | - | 827 | - | 27'1755 |
| Germany | 316'115 | - | 316'115 | - | 420'825 | - | - | - | 12'569 | - | 749'309 |
| Ghana | 17'406 | - | 17'406 | 17'406 | 1'859 | - | - | - | - | - | 19'265 |
| Greece | 18'489 | 11'750 | 30'239 | - | 26'141 | - | - | - | 198 | - | 56'578 |
| Grenada | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Guatemala | 226 | - | 226 | 100 | 125 | - | - | - | - | 3'580 | 3'851 |
| Guinea | 8'839 | - | 8'839 | 8'839 | 198 | - | - | - | - | - | 9'037 |
| Guinea-Bissau[10] | 8'684 | - | 8'684 | 8'684 | 123 | - | - | - | - | - | 8'807 |
| Guyana | 11 | - | 11 | 11 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 12 |
| Haiti[20] | 3 | - | 3 | 2 | 11 | - | - | - | 977 | - | 991 |
| Honduras | 30 | - | 30 | 19 | 9 | - | 174'000 | - | - | 5'100 | 179'139 |
| Hungary | 4'393 | - | 4'393 | 256 | 36'693 | - | - | - | 132 | - | 41'218 |
| Iceland | 179 | - | 179 | - | 161 | - | - | - | 131 | - | 471 |
| India | 201'381 | - | 201'381 | 27'076 | 6'480 | - | - | - | - | - | 207'861 |
| Indonesia | 5'957 | - | 5'957 | 5'957 | 7'591 | - | - | - | - | - | 13'548 |
| Iran (Islamic Rep. of) | 979'437 | - | 979'437 | 979'437 | 42 | 12 | - | - | - | - | 979'491 |
| Iraq[21] | 277'701 | - | 277'701 | 277'701 | 7'420 | 5'921 | 4'403'287 | 1'747 | 50'000 | 29 | 4'746'105 |
| Ireland | 6'125 | - | 6'125 | - | 5'056 | - | - | - | 99 | - | 11'279 |
| Israel | 381 | 38'139 | 38'520 | - | 6'591 | - | - | - | 15 | - | 45'106 |
| Italy | 118'047 | - | 118'047 | - | 60'156 | - | - | - | 747 | - | 178'950 |
| Jamaica | 12 | - | 12 | 12 | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | 17 |
| Japan[22] | 2'474 | - | 2'474 | 389 | 13'831 | - | - | - | 683 | - | 16'988 |
| Jordan[23] | 664'118 | - | 664'118 | 664'118 | 24'935 | - | - | - | - | - | 689'053 |
| Kazakhstan | 708 | - | 708 | 708 | 97 | - | - | - | 7'909 | - | 8'714 |
| Kenya | 553'912 | - | 553'912 | 553'912 | 39'969 | 1'231 | - | - | 20'000 | - | 615'112 |
| Kuwait | 741 | - | 741 | 741 | 900 | - | - | - | 93'000 | - | 94'641 |
| Kyrgyzstan | 354 | - | 354 | 354 | 158 | - | - | - | 9'116 | - | 9'630 |
| Lao People's Dem. Rep. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Latvia[24] | 208 | - | 208 | - | 179 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Lebanon | 1'070'854 | - | 1'070'854 | 1'070'854 | 12'138 | - | - | - | 252'195 | - | 252'582 |
| Lesotho | 31 | - | 31 | - | 4 | - | - | - | - | 5'238 | 1'088'231 |
| Liberia | 36'505 | - | 36'505 | 36'506 | 15 | 58 | - | - | 1 | 1'479 | 35 |
| Libya | 9'305 | - | 9'305 | 9'306 | 27'479 | - | 434'869 | - | - | - | 38'058 |
| Liechtenstein | 150 | - | 150 | 23 | 97 | - | - | - | - | - | 471'653 |
| Lithuania | 1'093 | - | 1'093 | - | 82 | - | - | - | - | - | 247 |
| Luxembourg | 1'332 | - | 1'332 | - | 2'395 | - | - | - | 3'468 | - | 4'941 |
| Madagascar | 10 | - | 10 | 10 | 12 | - | - | - | 82 | - | 3'809 |
| Malawi | 9'019 | - | 9'019 | 9'019 | 14'470 | - | - | - | - | - | 23'489 |
| Malaysia | 94'030 | 136 | 94'166 | 94'166 | 60'415 | - | - | - | 11'689 | 80'000 | 246'270 |
| Mali | 15'917 | - | 15'917 | 15'917 | 340 | 4'088 | 61'920 | 53'551 | - | - | 136'816 |
| Malta | 7'075 | - | 7'075 | 1'547 | 590 | - | - | - | - | - | 7'665 |
| Mauritania | 51'394 | 26'000 | 77'394 | 51'394 | 497 | - | - | - | - | - | 77'891 |
| Mauritius | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Mexico | 2'923 | - | 2'923 | 1'021 | 1'350 | - | - | - | 13 | - | 4'286 |
| Micronesia (Federated States of) | 3 | - | 3 | 3 | 11 | - | - | - | - | - | 14 |
| Monaco | 32 | - | 32 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 32 |
| Mongolia | 9 | - | 9 | 9 | 6 | - | - | - | - | - | 15 |
| Montenegro | 1'771 | - | 1'771 | 1'671 | 20 | - | - | - | - | - | 1'791 |
| Montserrat | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3'252 | 10'622 | 15'875 |
| Morocco | 3'908 | - | 3'908 | 3'908 | 1'565 | - | - | - | - | - | 5'473 |
| Mozambique | 5'622 | - | 5'622 | 3'247 | 14'825 | - | - | - | - | - | 20'447 |
| Myanmar[25] | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 | 451'089 | 25'265 | 938'000 | - | 1'414'357 |
| Namibia | 1'737 | - | 1'737 | 1'547 | 1'112 | 21 | - | - | - | 1'706 | 4'576 |
| Nauru | 506 | - | 506 | - | 302 | - | - | - | - | - | 808 |
| Nepal[26] | 32'667 | - | 32'667 | 17'133 | 17 | - | - | - | - | 384 | 33'068 |
| Netherlands | 88'536 | - | 88'536 | - | 28'051 | - | - | - | 1'951 | - | 118'538 |
| New Zealand | 1'337 | - | 1'337 | - | 159 | - | - | - | - | - | 1'496 |
| Nicaragua | 330 | - | 330 | 259 | 131 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 465 |
| Niger | 124'721 | - | 124'721 | 124'721 | 106 | - | 137'337 | - | - | 79'880 | 332'164 |
| Nigeria | 1'395 | - | 1'395 | 1'395 | 386 | - | 2'172'532 | - | - | - | 2'174'313 |
| Norway | 50'389 | - | 50'389 | - | 25'316 | - | - | - | 2'561 | - | 78'266 |
| Oman | 245 | - | 245 | 245 | 190 | - | - | - | - | - | 435 |
| Pakistan | 1'561'182 | - | 1'561'182 | 1'561'182 | 6'442 | 3 | 1'148'108 | 676'638 | - | - | 3'390'353 |
| Palau | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Panama | 2'322 | 15'000 | 17'322 | 331 | 2'934 | - | - | - | 2 | - | 20'258 |
| Papua New Guinea[27] | 4'929 | 4'581 | 9'510 | - | 445 | - | - | - | - | - | 9'955 |
| Paraguay | 172 | - | 172 | 45 | 37 | - | - | - | - | - | 209 |
| Peru | 1'488 | - | 1'488 | 108 | 379 | - | - | - | - | - | 1'867 |
| Philippines | 269 | - | 269 | 30 | 210 | - | 63'174 | 254'248 | 7'138 | 68 | 325'707 |
| Poland | 14'065 | - | 14'065 | - | 3'303 | - | - | - | 10'825 | - | 28'193 |
| Portugal[28] | 699 | - | 699 | - | 641 | - | - | - | 14 | - | 1'354 |
| Qatar | 120 | - | 120 | 120 | 118 | - | - | - | 1'200 | - | 1'438 |
| Rep. of Korea | 1'463 | - | 1'463 | 223 | 5'442 | - | - | - | 197 | - | 7'102 |
| Rep. of Moldova | 448 | - | 448 | 448 | 110 | - | - | - | 5'014 | - | 5'570 |
| Romania | 2'598 | - | 2'598 | 314 | 432 | - | - | - | 240 | - | 3'270 |
| Russian Federation[29] | 314'506 | - | 314'506 | 7'070 | 2'088 | 4 | - | - | 101'813 | - | 418'411 |
| Rwanda | 144'737 | - | 144'737 | 144'737 | 414 | 5'054 | - | - | - | 968 | 151'173 |
| Saint Kitts and Nevis | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Saint Lucia | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |

| Country/territory of asylum[1] | REFUGEES | | | | | Returned refugees[5] | IDPs protected/ assisted by UNHCR, incl people in IDP-like situations[6] | Returned IDPs[7] | Persons under UNHCR's statelessness mandate[8] | Others of concern to UNHCR[9] | Total population of concern |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Refugees[2] | People in refugee-like situations[3] | Total refugees and people in refugee-like situations | Of whom assisted by UNHCR | Asylum-seekers (pending cases)[4] | | | | | | |
| Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Samoa | - | - | - | - | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | 3 |
| Sao Tome and Principe | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Saudi Arabia | 118 | 7 | 125 | 125 | 32 | - | - | - | 70'000 | - | 70'157 |
| Senegal | 14'392 | - | 14'392 | 14'392 | 3'119 | - | - | - | - | - | 17'511 |
| Serbia and Kosovo: S/RES/1244 (19 | 35'332 | - | 35'332 | 7'383 | 116 | 328 | 220'002 | 545 | 2'700 | - | 259'023 |
| Sierra Leone | 760 | - | 760 | 604 | 17 | - | - | - | - | - | 777 |
| Singapore | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Sint Maarten (Dutch part) | 3 | - | 3 | 3 | 8 | - | - | - | - | - | 11 |
| Slovakia | 820 | - | 820 | - | 173 | - | - | - | 1'523 | 85 | 2'601 |
| Slovenia | 292 | - | 292 | - | 103 | - | - | - | 4 | - | 399 |
| Solomon Islands | 3 | - | 3 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 |
| Somalia | 8'081 | - | 8'081 | 8'081 | 10'120 | 32'344 | 1'133'000 | 5'000 | - | 86 | 1'188'631 |
| South Africa[30] | 121'845 | - | 121'845 | 12'764 | 1'096'083 | - | - | - | - | - | 1'217'708 |
| South Sudan[31] | 263'016 | - | 263'016 | 263'016 | 839 | 159 | 1'790'427 | - | - | - | 2'054'441 |
| Spain[32] | 5'798 | - | 5'798 | - | 11'020 | - | - | - | 440 | - | 17'258 |
| Sri Lanka[33] | 784 | - | 784 | 784 | 608 | 852 | 44'934 | 6'112 | - | - | 55'290 |
| State of Palestine | - | - | - | - | - | 12 | - | - | - | - | 12 |
| Sudan | 309'639 | - | 309'639 | 309'639 | 12'581 | 39'494 | 3'218'234 | 152'663 | - | 3'355 | 3'735'966 |
| Suriname | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | 5 |
| Swaziland | 696 | - | 696 | 186 | 278 | 7 | - | - | - | 3 | 974 |
| Sweden | 169'520 | - | 169'520 | - | 157'046 | - | - | - | 31'062 | - | 357'628 |
| Switzerland | 73'338 | - | 73'338 | - | 32'701 | - | - | - | 69 | - | 106'106 |
| Syrian Arab Rep.[34] | 21'113 | - | 21'113 | 21'113 | 5'251 | 189 | 6'563'462 | - | 160'000 | 3'554 | 6'753'569 |
| Tajikistan | 1'969 | - | 1'969 | 855 | 258 | - | - | - | 19'489 | 53 | 21'779 |
| Thailand[35] | 55'145 | 53'116 | 108'261 | 108'261 | 8'271 | - | - | - | 443'862 | 438 | 560'832 |
| The former Yugoslav Republic of Mace | 530 | 171 | 701 | 701 | 17 | - | - | - | 857 | - | 1'385 |
| Timor-Leste | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 | 6 |
| Togo | 21'953 | - | 21'953 | 13'451 | 752 | 7 | - | - | - | - | 22'712 |
| Tonga | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Trinidad and Tobago | 114 | - | 114 | 114 | 82 | - | - | - | - | 5 | 201 |
| Tunisia | 665 | - | 665 | 665 | 90 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 757 |
| Turkey[36] | 2'541'352 | - | 2'541'352 | 2'499'583 | 212'408 | - | - | - | 780 | - | 2'754'540 |
| Turkmenistan | 26 | - | 26 | 26 | - | - | - | - | 7'125 | - | 7'151 |
| Turks and Caicos Islands | 4 | - | 4 | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 |
| Uganda | 477'187 | - | 477'187 | 477'187 | 35'779 | 1'192 | - | - | - | 180'000 | 694'158 |
| Ukraine[37] | 3'273 | - | 3'273 | 574 | 6'502 | 1 | 1'600'000 | - | 35'226 | - | 1'645'004 |
| United Arab Emirates | 663 | - | 663 | 663 | 421 | - | - | - | - | - | 1'084 |
| United Kingdom | 123'067 | - | 123'067 | - | 45'870 | - | - | - | 41 | - | 168'978 |
| United Rep. of Tanzania | 211'845 | - | 211'845 | 189'618 | 2'150 | - | - | - | - | 168'625 | 382'620 |
| United States of America[38] | 273'202 | - | 273'202 | - | 286'188 | - | - | - | - | - | 559'370 |
| Uruguay | 301 | - | 301 | 106 | 79 | - | - | - | - | - | 380 |
| Uzbekistan[39] | 107 | - | 107 | 107 | - | - | - | - | 86'703 | - | 86'810 |
| Vanuatu | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) | 6'894 | 167'000 | 173'754 | 34'578 | 235 | - | - | - | - | - | 173'989 |
| Viet Nam | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 11'000 | - | 11'000 |
| Yemen | 267'173 | - | 267'173 | 117'441 | 9'866 | - | 2'532'032 | - | - | 17 | 2'809'088 |
| Zambia | 26'447 | - | 26'447 | 26'447 | 2'411 | - | - | - | - | 23'321 | 52'179 |
| Zimbabwe[40] | 6'950 | - | 6'950 | 6'950 | 259 | 31 | - | - | 300'000 | 3'384 | 310'624 |
| Total | 15'483'893 | 637'534 | 16'121'427 | 12'282'792 | 3'219'941 | 201'415 | 37'494'172 | 2'317'314 | 3'687'729 | 870'740 | 63'912'738 |

| UNHCR-Bureaux | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| - Central Africa-Great Lakes | 1'173'389 | 15'852 | 1'189'241 | 1'058'223 | 18'468 | 35'237 | 1'889'161 | 1'014'893 | 1'302 | 187'577 | 4'335'879 |
| - East and Horn of Africa | 2'739'375 | - | 2'739'375 | 2'739'375 | 108'959 | 74'467 | 6'193'860 | 157'663 | 20'000 | 234'381 | 9'528'505 |
| - Southern Africa | 189'842 | - | 189'842 | 61'967 | 1'159'702 | 4'698 | - | - | 300'000 | 28'414 | 1'682'656 |
| - Western Africa | 294'953 | - | 294'953 | 286'295 | 7'885 | 16'375 | 2'880'081 | 53'958 | 700'118 | 71'536 | 3'824'876 |
| Total Africa | 4'397'559 | 15'852 | 4'413'411 | 4'145'860 | 1'293'014 | 130'777 | 10'762'882 | 1'226'506 | 1'021'418 | 521'908 | 19'369'916 |
| Asia and Pacific | 3'551'937 | 278'318 | 3'830'255 | 3'088'570 | 134'613 | 62'250 | 2'876'611 | 1'088'516 | 1'563'338 | 231'485 | 9'790'048 |
| Middle East and North Africa | 2'675'408 | 64'146 | 2'739'554 | 2'451'317 | 142'371 | 6'126 | 13'933'650 | 1'747 | 374'237 | 8'840 | 17'206'525 |
| Europe | 4'362'605 | 29'814 | 4'391'419 | 2'555'552 | 1'299'246 | 468 | 2'604'962 | 545 | 592'151 | 83'414 | 9'172'205 |
| Americas | 496'384 | 250'404 | 746'788 | 43'493 | 350'697 | 1'794 | 7'113'067 | - | 136'585 | 25'113 | 8'374'044 |
| Total | 15'483'893 | 637'534 | 16'121'427 | 12'282'792 | 3'219'941 | 201'415 | 37'494'172 | 2'317'314 | 3'687'729 | 870'740 | 63'912'738 |

| UN major regions | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Africa | 4'769'513 | 41'952 | 4'811'385 | 4'443'809 | 1'367'409 | 130'781 | 11'197'751 | 1'226'506 | 1'021'440 | 521'910 | 20'277'162 |
| Asia | 5'366'000 | 328'582 | 5'694'582 | 7'750'753 | 398'682 | 68'372 | 17'265'028 | 1'090'263 | 1'942'856 | 246'303 | 29'704'040 |
| Europe | 1'808'289 | 12'135 | 1'820'424 | 44'719 | 1'083'587 | 468 | 1'918'328 | 545 | 586'848 | 77'414 | 5'487'592 |
| Latin America and the Caribbean | 87'294 | 250'404 | 337'698 | 43'493 | 44'887 | 1'794 | 7'113'067 | - | 136'585 | 25'113 | 7'659'144 |
| Northern America | 406'080 | - | 406'080 | - | 305'710 | - | - | - | - | - | 711'900 |
| Oceania | 43'707 | 4'581 | 48'288 | 18 | 21'606 | - | - | - | - | - | 69'894 |
| Total | 15'483'893 | 637'534 | 16'121'427 | 12'282'792 | 3'219'941 | 201'415 | 37'494'172 | 2'317'314 | 3'687'729 | 870'740 | 63'912'738 |

*Notes:*

The data are generally provided by Governments, based on their own definitions and methods of data collection.
A dash ("-") indicates that the value is zero, not available or not applicable. All data are provisional and subject to change.
[1] Country or territory of asylum or residence.
[2] Persons recognized as refugees under the 1951 UN Convention/1967 Protocol, the 1969 OAU Convention, in accordance with the UNHCR Statute, persons granted a complementary form of protection and those granted temporary protection. In the absence of Government figures, UNHCR has estimated the refugee population in many industrialized countries based on 10 years of individual asylum-seeker recognition.
[3] This category is descriptive in nature and includes groups of persons who are outside their country or territory of origin and who face protection risks similar to those of refugees, but for whom refugee status has, for practical or other reasons, not been ascertained.
[4] Persons whose application for asylum or refugee status is pending at any stage in the asylum procedure.
[5] Refugees who have returned to their place of origin during 2015. Source: country of origin and asylum.
[6] Persons who are displaced within their country and to whom UNHCR extends protection and/or assistance. It also includes people in IDP-like situations. This category is descriptive in nature and includes groups of persons who are inside their country of nationality or habitual residence and who face protection risks similar to those of IDPs but who, for practical or other reasons, could not be reported as such.
[7] IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR who have returned to their place of origin during 2015.
[8] Refers to persons who are not considered as nationals by any State under the operation of its law. This category refers to persons who fall under the agency's statelessness mandate because they are stateless according to this international definition, but data from some countries may also include persons with undetermined nationality. See Annex Table 7 at http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/15-WKD-table-7.xls for detailed notes.
[9] Refers to individuals who do not necessarily fall directly into any of the other groups but to whom UNHCR may extend its protection and/or assistance services. These activities might be based on humanitarian or other special grounds.
[10] According to the Government of Algeria, there are an estimated 165,000 Sahrawi refugees in the Tindouf camps.
[11] Australia's figures for asylum-seekers are based on the number of applications lodged for protection visas.
[12] The refugee population includes 200,000 persons originating from Myanmar in a refugee-like situation. The Government of Bangladesh estimates the population to be between 300,000 and 500,000.
[13] The 300,000 Vietnamese refugees are well integrated and in practice receive protection from the Government of China.
[14] UNHCR's assistance activities for IDPs in Cyprus ended in 1999. Visit the website of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) for further information.
[15] The number of Rwandan refugees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is subject to change based on an ongoing registration exercise. The figure 245,000 was provided by the Government of Democratic Republic of the Congo.
[16] This revised estimate of 133,770 stateless persons includes only individuals born in the country to parents who were both born abroad. It does not include individuals born in the country to one foreign-born and one Dominican-born parent, as per the previously reported figure of 210,000. This estimate does not include subsequent generations of individuals of foreign descent, as there is no reliable population data available on groups other than first-generation individuals. As such, this estimate does not include all persons without nationality in the country. It will be adjusted as official data becomes available on the number of individuals who have found an effective nationality solution.
[17] All figures relate to the end of 2014 except refugees.
[18] Almost all people recorded as being stateless have permanent residence and enjoy more rights than foreseen in the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons.
[19] Refugee figure relates to the end of 2014.
[20] Figure of stateless persons refers to individuals without a nationality who were born in the Dominican Republic prior to January 2010 and who were identified by UNHCR in Haiti during the reporting period.
[21] Pending a more accurate study into stateless in Iraq, the estimate of stateless persons in Iraq has been adjusted to reflect the reduction of statelessness in line with Law 26 of 2006, which allows stateless persons to apply for nationality in certain circumstances.
[22] Figures are UNHCR estimates.
[23] Includes 33,200 Iraqi refugees registered with UNHCR in Jordan. The Government estimated the number of Iraqis at 400,000 individuals at the end of March 2015. This includes refugees and other categories of Iraqis.
[24] This figure includes persons covered by two separate Laws. 178 fall under the Republic of Latvia's Law on Stateless Persons on 17 February 2004, which replaced the Law on the Status of Stateless Persons in the Republic of Latvia of 18 February 1999, and which determines the legal status of persons who are not considered as citizens by the legislation of any State and whose status is not determined by the 25th April 1995 Law (quoted below). 252,017 of the persons reported in this table fall under the Republic of Latvia's 25 April 1995 Law on the Status of Those Former USSR Citizens who are not Citizens of Latvia or of Any Other State, and are granted a transitional legal status to permanently residing persons (non-citizens) which entitles them to a set of rights and obligations generally beyond the minimum rights prescribed by the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons. The non-citizens enjoy the right to reside in Latvia ex lege and the right to acquire citizenship through registration and/or naturalisation (depending on age). A number of measures have been taken by the Latvian Government to facilitate their acquisition of citizenship; nonetheless, some non-citizens have chosen not to pursue naturalization. Some may have acquired a nationality other than Latvian nationality, however in the absence of reliable data in this regard, UNHCR includes in its statistical reporting the full number of non-citizens reported by Latvia.
[25] Figure of Stateless persons was estimated from the 2014 census. It does not include an estimated 151,921 stateless IDPs, persons in an IDP-like situation who are also of concern under the statelessness mandate because they are already included within the figures on IDPs. In Rakhine State it is estimated to be approximately one million.
[26] Various studies estimate that a large number of individuals lack citizenship certificates in Nepal. While these individuals are not all necessarily stateless, UNHCR has been working closely with the Government of Nepal and partners to address this situation.
[27] Refugee figure relates to the end of 2014.

[28] All figures relate to the end of 2014.
[29] Figure of Stateless persons refers to the census figure from 2010 adjusted to reflect the number of stateless persons who acquired nationality in 2011-2015. The figure includes 12,881 stateless persons holding a temporary or a permanent residence permit.
[30] An adjustment to 2014 end of year figures in particular for the number of asylum applications pending on appeal and review has resulted in a substantially higher figure for numbers of asylum seekers reported in South Africa for 2015. It should be noted that the current legal framework in South Africa does not enable the withdrawal (whether explicit or implicit) of asylum applications lodged.
[31] IDP figure in South Sudan includes 105,000 people who are in an IDP-like situation.
[32] Refugee figure relates to the end of 2014.
[33] The statistics of the remaining IDPs at the end of the year, while provided by the Government authorities at the district level, are being reviewed by the central authorities. Once this review has been concluded, the statistics will be changed accordingly.
[34] Refugee figure for Iraqis and Stateless persons in the Syrian Arab Republic was a Government estimate. UNHCR has registered and is assisting 18,300 Iraqis at the end of 2015.
[35] Figure of Stateless persons is updated from the Royal Thai Government. The decrease includes the grant of Thai nationality to over 18,000 stateless people in the last three years.
[36] Refugee figure for Syrians in Turkey was a Government estimate.
[37] IDP figure in Ukraine includes 800,000 people who are in an IDP-like situation.
[38] The refugee figure for the United States of America is currently under review, which may lead to an adjustment in future reports.
[39] Figure of stateless persons refers to those with permanent residence reported in 2010 by the Government. Information on other categories of stateless persons is not available.
[40] Figure of stateless persons is an estimate and currently under review.
*Source:* UNHCR/Governments.

# Table 2

## UNHCR budget and expenditure in 2015
United States dollars

| Sub-Region / Region | Ledger | Pillar 1 Refugee programme | Pillar 2 Stateless programme | Pillar 3 Reintegration projects | Pillar 4 IDP projects | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| West Africa | Budget | 229'700'946 | 5'925'386 | 18'671'616 | 38'548'387 | 292'846'334 |
| | Expenditure | 99'312'900 | 3'240'294 | 6'176'728 | 14'219'937 | 122'949'859 |
| East and Horn of Africa | Budget | 1'385'750'671 | 11'599'810 | 17'031'330 | 294'024'751 | 1'708'406'563 |
| | Expenditure | 583'760'089 | 3'482'486 | 7'729'066 | 65'537'974 | 660'509'615 |
| Central Africa and the Great Lakes | Budget | 505'440'938 | 3'730'164 | 54'587'608 | 135'742'376 | 699'501'085 |
| | Expenditure | 218'410'391 | 1'064'798 | 17'413'566 | 37'351'054 | 274'239'809 |
| Southern Africa | Budget | 72'322'737 | 1'481'945 | 0 | 533'421 | 74'338'104 |
| | Expenditure | 38'705'778 | 812'509 | 0 | 484'928 | 40'003'215 |
| [redacted] | | | | | | |
| Middle East | Budget | 1'169'403'783 | 3'897'994 | 35'763'788 | 744'826'650 | 1'953'892'215 |
| | Expenditure | 715'366'184 | 2'168'094 | 11'329'620 | 330'370'363 | 1'059'234'260 |
| North Africa | Budget | 181'198'757 | 50'000 | 0 | 2'218'046 | 183'466'803 |
| | Expenditure | 90'612'925 | 31'621 | 0 | 1'834'639 | 92'479'185 |
| [redacted] | | | | | | |
| South-West Asia | Budget | 198'064'955 | 304'241 | 106'538'716 | 55'262'387 | 360'170'298 |
| | Expenditure | 92'114'790 | 206'098 | 36'571'757 | 27'657'830 | 156'550'476 |
| Central Asia | Budget | 9'019'429 | 3'992'630 | 0 | 1'657'546 | 14'669'605 |
| | Expenditure | 5'263'488 | 3'138'109 | 0 | 1'263'532 | 9'665'129 |
| South Asia | Budget | 30'414'703 | 2'015'723 | 2'523'477 | 5'201'854 | 40'155'756 |
| | Expenditure | 15'660'726 | 478'477 | 493'324 | 4'892'284 | 21'524'812 |
| South-East Asia | Budget | 114'014'204 | 20'407'225 | 0 | 34'926'838 | 169'348'267 |
| | Expenditure | 43'664'209 | 6'576'240 | 0 | 9'302'015 | 59'542'464 |
| East Asia and the Pacific | Budget | 11'951'996 | 425'746 | 0 | 0 | 12'377'742 |
| | Expenditure | 8'865'501 | 280'801 | 0 | 0 | 9'146'302 |
| [redacted] | | | | | | |
| Eastern Europe | Budget | 370'486'506 | 2'750'744 | 0 | 46'849'419 | 420'086'670 |
| | Expenditure | 98'156'428 | 1'142'761 | 0 | 27'971'748 | 127'270'937 |
| South-Eastern Europe | Budget | 28'612'473 | 3'844'207 | 5'793'306 | 22'755'682 | 61'005'667 |
| | Expenditure | 20'240'933 | 2'323'369 | 2'027'760 | 9'719'624 | 34'311'686 |
| North, West and South Europe | Budget | 104'603'939 | 5'127'211 | 1'191'163 | 0 | 110'922'314 |
| | Expenditure | 77'863'687 | 3'243'229 | 1'053'167 | 0 | 82'160'083 |
| [redacted] | | | | | | |
| North America and the Caribbean | Budget | 12'952'737 | 9'031'219 | 0 | 0 | 21'983'956 |
| | Expenditure | 6'224'427 | 2'936'956 | 0 | 0 | 9'161'382 |
| Latin America | Budget | 63'974'638 | 1'108'772 | 0 | 30'360'765 | 95'444'175 |
| | Expenditure | 34'300'391 | 976'571 | 0 | 14'642'169 | 49'919'131 |
| [redacted] | | | | | | |
| Global Programmes | Budget | 315'098'777 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 315'098'777 |
| | Expenditure | 266'467'999 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 266'467'999 |
| Headquarters | Budget | 230'171'231 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 230'171'231 |
| | Expenditure | 213'003'905 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 213'003'905 |
| [redacted] | | | | | | |
| Operational Reserve | Budget | 436'523'725 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 436'523'725 |
| NAM Reserve | Budget | 20'000'000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20'000'000 |
| JPO | Budget | 12'000'000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12'000'000 |
| | Expenditure | 6'674'522 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6'674'522 |
| [redacted] | | | | | | |

# A/71/13 (Supp. No. 13)

Readex
Fiche

**General Assembly**
Official Records
Seventy-first Session
Supplement No. 13

A/71/13

# Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

**1 January-31 December 2015**

United Nations • New York, 2016

Please recycle

*Note*

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

ISSN 0082-8386

# Contents


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| | Letter of transmittal | 4 |
| | Letter dated 31 May 2016 from the Chair of the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East addressed to the Commissioner-General of the Agency | 6 |
| *Chapter* | | |
| I. | Contextual overview | 8 |
| | A. Political, economic and security developments | 8 |
| | B. Operational and organizational developments | 12 |
| | C. Legal matters | 15 |
| | D. Financial overview | 20 |
| II. | Subprogramme review presented within the framework of the human development goals of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees | 25 |
| | A. Goal 1. A long and healthy life | 25 |
| | B. Goal 2. Acquired knowledge and skills | 27 |
| | C. Goal 3. A decent standard of living | 29 |
| | D. Goal 4. Human rights enjoyed to the fullest | 32 |

## Letter dated 1 July 2016 from the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to submit to the General Assembly the annual report on the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for 2015. The report is submitted in compliance with the request contained in paragraph 21 of resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949 and with paragraph 8 of resolution 1315 (XIII) of 12 December 1958.

As in previous years, the report describes political, economic, security and operational developments in the UNRWA fields of operations in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as significant legal matters, progress in programme reforms, the Agency's financial situation and priorities for the coming year. The report also includes a review of progress towards the achievement of human development goals, as set out in the Agency's medium-term strategy for 2010-2015.

The Advisory Commission of UNRWA, comprising 25 Member States and three observers, endorsed a draft of the present report prior to its session held in May 2016, and a letter that the Chair of the Commission addressed to me precedes the report. The ongoing engagement and constructive advice of the Commission continues to be essential to UNRWA. In accordance with usual practice, a draft of the report has also been shared with the Government of Israel.

At the time of submitting the present report, I note a general deep sense of despair and insecurity that runs through the Palestine refugee community. Confronted with hopelessness and fear, amplified by the unresolved Palestinian refugee questions, many are joining the refugee exodus within the region and into Europe, often on perilous sea journeys. However, during my trips and meetings with Palestine refugees in camps throughout the UNRWA areas of operations, I could also witness extraordinary courage, determination and strength.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, as the armed conflict entered its sixth year and intensified across multiple front lines, the widespread disregard for civilian lives has continued to result in increasing humanitarian and protection needs. In the midst of the bloodshed and destruction, the 560,000 Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA in that country are among those worst affected. Hundreds of thousands have been subjected to continued and repeated displacement, and thousands in Yarmuk and Khan al-Shih remain exposed to active conflict and violence, in conditions of unimaginable suffering.

Jordan and Lebanon have been generous in offering sanctuary to more than 1 million civilians fleeing the Syrian Arab Republic, despite the substantial burden this has placed on them. It is vital that the fundamental principle of non-refoulement be honoured with regard to Palestine refugees fleeing the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and that, in accordance with international law, they not be discriminated

against. It is also critical that the international community continue to provide support to both countries.

In Gaza, as a result of the nine-year Israeli blockade, almost the entire population is dependent on aid to meet basic needs, as unemployment remains among the highest in the world. The situation has been compounded by repeated cycles of conflict that have led to heavy losses of life among civilians and psychological trauma, inflicted major damages to private and public infrastructure and severely undermined the provision of basic services. Tens of thousands of homes remain in ruins after the most recent conflict, in the summer of 2014. Reconstruction is a humanitarian imperative and must be accelerated to enable Gaza to embark on the road to recovery with the support of the international community. The psychological impact of those factors and of the major restrictions on freedom of movement are extremely severe.

In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, violence and operations by Israeli security forces, access restrictions, forced displacement, demolitions and other rights violations have increased significantly since October 2015. As a result of this intensified protection crisis, the casualties and injuries that ensued and the impact of long-term occupation, Palestinian living standards and opportunities to improve them are undermined, and the demand for UNRWA services has remained high.

In 2015, UNRWA faced the most serious financial crisis in its 66-year-long history, which threatened the opening of some 700 schools in the Middle East. The extraordinary mobilization of partners allowed the Agency to bridge that gap and enabled it to sustain the schooling for 500,000 girls and boys. The 2015 shortfall shed a new light on the serious risks for the entire region of an underfunded UNRWA. The Agency's role as a contributor to a measure of dignity and stability was more clearly recognized than ever, as was the urgency of breaking the cycle of the Agency's financial instability. The current programme budget deficit for 2016 stands at $74 million. While the Agency has engaged in far-reaching reforms, introduced stringent budget processes and controls and approved a zero-growth budget for 2016 to achieve a more stable financial footing, the accompanying and increased support from donors and partners remains essential.

In a region torn by conflict, UNRWA provides a critical lifeline to Palestine refugees. The remarkable dedication of the Agency's staff enables it to respond rapidly and effectively to ever mounting needs. They have shown extraordinary courage in continuing to work in extremely difficult circumstances, and I take this opportunity to honour fallen colleagues in Gaza, the West Bank and the Syrian Arab Republic.

In the current volatile context, it is crucial to restore hope and a political horizon for the people in the region. As a matter of dignity, it is essential to strengthen the commitment to Palestine refugees and to UNRWA.

(*Signed*) Pierre **Krähenbühl**
Commissioner-General

## Letter dated 31 May 2016 from the Chair of the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East addressed to the Commissioner-General of the Agency

At its regular session, held in Amman on 30 and 31 May 2016, the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) considered your draft annual report on the Agency's activities and operations, covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2015, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forthcoming seventy-first session.

The Commission commends UNRWA for its efforts in continuing to deliver services to Palestine refugees in all fields of operations in accordance with its mandate.

The Commission underlines the vital role that UNRWA plays in promoting regional stability until a just and lasting solution to the refugee situation is reached in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions, including General Assembly resolutions 194 (III) and 302 (IV). The Commission notes that operating challenges continue to increase in all five fields owing to conflict and instability or their effects in neighbouring fields. The Commission commends and thanks the host authorities for their work in support of Palestine refugees, including through the facilitation of UNRWA work, and notes that UNRWA is needed now more than ever. In this context, the Commission recognizes again the enduring hardship and growing needs of Palestine refugees affected by displacement and its consequences for the past 67 years.

The Commission is extremely concerned about the increasing volatility in the region and the increasing violence, marginalization and poverty that continue to affect Palestine refugees across the five fields of operations. This makes support for UNRWA work in delivering humanitarian and development assistance vitally important. The Commission thus urges all relevant parties to grant access for humanitarian purposes to those refugee populations. The Commission calls upon all relevant parties to comply fully with their obligations under international law, including humanitarian law, as well as to respect United Nations resolutions, and to enable UNRWA to fulfil its humanitarian obligations without hindrance or additional cost. The Commission asks all relevant parties to refrain from taking any actions that jeopardize the safety, security and neutrality of UNRWA installations and staff. The Commission commends UNRWA staff for continuing their work under very dangerous and difficult conditions.

The Commission remains concerned about the level of threats and attacks against UNRWA personnel in conflict areas, in particular threats to and attacks on staff while delivering services. The Commission also remains extremely concerned about the Agency's lack of access to and information on its staff detained by certain authorities, and it reminds those authorities of their responsibilities in that regard, including those referenced in General Assembly resolution 36/232. The Commission deplores the death of UNRWA personnel as a result of conflict.

The Commission is concerned about the considerable increase in violence in the West Bank and the number of sustained injuries and deaths mentioned in the annual report of the Commissioner-General. The Commission stresses that forced displacement, the destruction of homes and economic assets, the separation barrier

and the closure of the West Bank and other restrictions on movement therein, including in East Jerusalem, imposed by the Israeli authorities have a profound negative effect on the living conditions and well-being of Palestine refugees. The Commission is concerned that settler violence has continued with relative impunity, resulting in death, injuries and damages to private Palestinian property, including those of Palestine refugees. The Commission is concerned that recurrent hostilities have led to a dramatic deterioration in socioeconomic conditions, increased desperation and frustration across Gaza and a greater reliance on UNRWA services.

The Commission notes with alarm the conditions facing Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic and recognizes the additional strain on neighbouring countries resulting from the arrival of Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic — 41,000 were in Lebanon at the end of 2015 and 16,400 in Jordan. It thanks the people and the authorities in those countries for their generosity in supporting those refugees. The Commission notes the strong efforts by UNRWA to fulfil its mandate to the Palestine refugees fleeing from the Syrian Arab Republic and stresses the need for sustained efforts to help the refugees to improve their living conditions, consistent with relevant General Assembly resolutions. The Commission is concerned about the increasing demands on UNRWA and stresses the need to ensure that UNRWA services that are adequate in scope and quality are delivered to the refugees.

The Commission remains concerned about persisting funding shortfalls, in particular for the UNRWA programme budget, which undermine the Agency's efforts to promote human development and meet the refugees' needs. In this regard, the Commission notes that, in 2015, UNRWA continued to widen its donor base, strengthened its relations with existing donors and engaged with new private partners. Nonetheless, gains in resources have been countered by the market effects of foreign exchange rate fluctuation. The Commission remains concerned that multiple escalating crises increase demands on UNRWA services, while constrained resources, as well as economic conditions, continue to threaten the Agency's financial sustainability.

The Commission gives its full support to the Commissioner-General in continuing important reforms to strengthen the provision of services by UNRWA and their cost-effectiveness, taking the financial situation into account and the concerns of host countries in terms of impact on services.

The Commission notes the impressive results outlined in the annual report of the Commissioner-General in the field of education, health and protection, despite difficult circumstances and financial constraints. The Commission calls upon all parties to exert all efforts to mobilize the resources required to secure the Agency's financial stability and sustain its operations through the medium-term strategy for 2010-2015. It notes the importance of providing services without interruption, in line with the Agency's mandate.

The Commission thanks donors for their continued support to the important work and activities of UNRWA, as well as for their encouragement to other donors towards expanding the donor base.

(*Signed*) Ali **Mustafa**
Chair of the Advisory Commission

# Chapter I
# Contextual overview

## A. Political, economic and security developments

1. Within a volatile regional environment in 2015, violence and marginalization continued to affect Palestine refugees registered across all five fields of operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA): Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Within this context and in line with its mandate derived from the General Assembly to assist and protect Palestine refugees, the Agency continued to deliver human development and humanitarian assistance in the areas of education, health, relief, social services, infrastructure and camp improvement, microfinance and protection.

### Gaza Strip

2. Within a highly unstable political, security and socioeconomic field of operations, UNRWA continued to meet the needs of 1,311,920 registered Palestine refugees.[1] On the political stage, the Palestinian national consensus Government, formed in 2014 following an agreement on 23 April 2014 between Fatah and Hamas, faced considerable challenges and was unable to fully exercise leadership in the Gaza Strip owing to a lack of political unity. Civil servants employed by the de facto authorities continued to receive only partial salaries, a state of affairs that undermined service delivery and created tensions with Palestinian Authority employees.

3. Security remained volatile with recurring incidents, the firing of rockets and frequent unrest, including demonstrations connected to tensions in East Jerusalem and parts of the West Bank that led to at least 18 fatalities and more than 750 people injured among Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Recurrent hostilities and the blockade continued to have a severe impact on socioeconomic conditions and to fuel an increasing sense of desperation and frustration across Gaza and a greater reliance on UNRWA services.

4. The crippling Israeli blockade entered into its ninth year. The unemployment rate in Gaza in 2015 was 41 per cent,[2] one of the highest rates worldwide. A lack of financial means to buy food continued to cause high levels of insecurity, with the Agency increasing its food assistance caseload to almost 900,000 individuals by the end of the year, through both the social safety net programme and the occupied Palestinian territory emergency appeal.

5. While 2015 witnessed a slight easing of Israeli restrictions on the movement of goods into and out of Gaza, the impact on the economy was not tangible and

[1] The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) serves an additional 76,748 "other registered persons" in the Gaza Strip, a term which refers to those who, at the time of original registration, did not satisfy all of the UNRWA Palestine refugee criteria but were determined to have suffered significant loss or endured significant hardship for reasons related to the conflict of 1948 in Palestine, and those who belong to the families of other registered persons.

[2] State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, *Press release on the results of the labour force survey in Palestine, 2015* (Ramallah, 25 February 2016).

exports remained a fraction of the quantities that used to leave Gaza before the blockade. In total 1,353 truckloads exited Gaza in 2015 (including 730 transferred to the West Bank), for an average of 113 truckloads per month, just 10 per cent of the monthly average during the first quarter of 2007. The Gaza reconstruction mechanism, established in September 2014 on the basis of a trilateral agreement between Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the United Nations, continued to facilitate the entry into Gaza of certain restricted building materials and machinery. However, the overall pace of reconstruction following the hostilities in July and August 2014 remained slow.

**West Bank**

6. In 2015, many of the 792,081 registered Palestine refugees[3] in the West Bank continued to endure difficult socioeconomic conditions marked by a considerable increase in violence, administrative measures and punitive demolitions, as well as frustration with the lack of political progress towards a negotiated two-State solution. Restricted access to land, services, and markets imposed severe challenges for refugees, particularly those living or owning land in Area C and the seam zone. Economic stagnation continued to stifle Palestinian livelihoods, eroding purchasing power and prolonging the need for Palestinians to rely on humanitarian assistance.

7. In 2015, rates of unemployment among Palestine refugees remained higher than for the population as a whole, with 19.3 per cent and 18.5 per cent, respectively. Joblessness for those living in camps was higher still (25.7 per cent). Moreover, of the 30 per cent of refugees residing in camps, 29 per cent were food insecure.

8. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 170 Palestinians[4] and 26 Israelis were killed during 2015 in attacks and clashes in the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel. Eighty-three per cent (141) of the Palestinian and 85 per cent (22) of the Israeli fatalities were recorded during the last quarter of the year. Approximately 63 per cent of the Palestinians killed after 1 October 2015 were perpetrators or alleged perpetrators of attacks against Israelis, including by stabbing, car ramming and shooting. During the year, 15,377 Palestinians and 350 Israelis were reported as injured, with over 90 per cent of those injured Palestinians recorded in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.[5]

9. Israel continued to advance plans for the transfer of 46 Bedouin communities populated by a Palestine refugee majority from the West Bank to three townships. Groundwork at one of the sites, slated to accommodate the population targeted for transfer, was completed in September 2015. Measures creating a coercive environment that drive communities "at risk" from their homes continued, including through stop-work orders, demolitions, confiscations of post-demolition humanitarian assistance and settler harassment or violence. Within such an environment, free and informed consent by affected communities to any relocation was effectively rendered impossible.

[3] UNRWA serves an additional 178,552 other registered persons in the West Bank.

[4] Fatalities included 49 refugees, 42 of which were killed during the last quarter of 2015.

[5] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs press release, "170 Palestinians and 26 Israelis killed in 2015", 30 December 2015, available from http://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/170-palestinians-and-26-israelis-killed-2015-enarhe.

10. In 2015, the Israeli authorities demolished 550 Palestinian-owned structures built without permits, displacing 807 people, including 287 Palestine refugees and further affecting 2,665 people, including 692 Palestine refugees. This was a considerable increase on the 411 refugees displaced in 2014. In addition, punitive demolition, a practice that targets the family homes of alleged perpetrators of violent attacks against Israeli civilians and security forces, continued in 2015. Illegal under international law as a form of collective punishment, punitive demolitions displaced at least 151 Palestinians, including 26 refugees, during the year.

11. The last three months of 2015 saw an increase in movement obstacles,[6] especially in Jerusalem and the Hebron area.

**Syrian Arab Republic**

12. In 2015, the operational context in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to be defined by intense conflict and its dire humanitarian impact. There were many incidents in which Palestine refugees were killed or injured. UNRWA publicly demanded from all relevant parties respect for and compliance with their obligations under international law to protect Palestine refugees across the Syrian Arab Republic at all times. The needs of the 450,000 Palestine refugees who remained in the Syrian Arab Republic, out of 560,000 registered before the crisis,[7] remained significant. Some 280,000 refugees had been internally displaced, while 110,000 had departed the country to seek safety elsewhere. As of December 2015, 14 UNRWA staff had been killed and 28 had been missing, detained, kidnapped or presumed to be detained since the beginning of the crisis.

13. The economic context was marked by significant price rises, high unemployment and inflation, essential commodity shortages and the declining value of the Syrian pound, further compounded by the continued impact of sanctions. Against this backdrop, 95 per cent of Palestine refugees were dependent on UNRWA assistance to survive.

14. Palestine refugees often had fewer coping mechanisms compared with their Syrian counterparts and their options to travel legally outside the Syrian Arab Republic were severely restricted. Some 47,000 Palestine refugees resided in conflict-affected areas and in locations that were inaccessible.

**Lebanon**

15. Lebanon is threatened on its own territory by several complex and interrelated destabilizing factors, including the ongoing threat of violence, political deadlock, social unrest and global political interests (see S/2015/837). In 2015, the daily life of Palestine refugees, including those from the Syrian Arab Republic, who are among the most vulnerable groups in Lebanon, continued to be dominated by poverty and debt. Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon also supported an influx of Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic who have placed additional demands on limited and ageing camp infrastructure and on UNRWA to provide basic

[6] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Humanitarian Bulletin, November 2015, available from https://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_the_humanitarian_monitor_2014_12_11_english.pdf.

[7] Excluding the additional 70,035 other registered persons served by UNRWA in the Syrian Arab Republic.

services. UNRWA continued to advocate for the rights of Palestine refugees who are barred from exercising several syndicated professions and face restrictions on the right to own and inherit property in Lebanon. Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic continued to face both limitations on their ability to enter Lebanese territory legally and a precarious legal status within Lebanon, including limited access to crucial civil registration procedures. UNRWA continued to appeal to the Lebanese authorities to uphold the principle of non-refoulement and equal treatment of all refugees, in accordance with international standards, and to consider temporary access for Palestine refugees fleeing the war in the Syrian Arab Republic, for humanitarian reasons.

16. In 2015, nine years after its destruction, the Nahr el-Bared camp had reached the halfway stage of its reconstruction. Although it had originally been intended for the reconstruction of the old camp to be completed by mid-2011, the project has faced numerous challenges since its inception, including logistical, legal and political obstacles and, most recently, a marked decline in the level of donations from the international community for project completion.

**Jordan**

17. Jordan hosts 2,144,233 registered Palestine refugees,[8] the vast majority of whom possess the Jordanian nationality, thereby enjoying socioeconomic and political benefits. A subset of approximately 150,000 Palestine refugees who fled Gaza in 1967 are largely excluded from Jordanian nationality and related benefits, such as access to public services. While Jordan has remained stable in an increasingly insecure region, successive waves of refugees from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic have placed considerable pressure on the nation's economy and infrastructure.

18. Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic recorded with UNRWA in Jordan stood at approximately 16,400 at the end of 2015. While the number of new arrivals slowed, owing in part to the government policy of non-admission, the population continued to grow gradually during the year by 1,400 individuals. Those refugees faced limited livelihood opportunities, restrictions on employment and the threat of forcible return as a result of a lack of legal status. Eighty-three per cent struggled to meet basic needs. In contrast to other refugees fleeing the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, Palestine refugees from that country were particularly vulnerable as they faced difficulties in accessing courts and civil status and registration processes, such as the issuance of birth certificates, again as a result of a lack of legal status. They were also prevented from accessing humanitarian assistance available to other refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic. UNRWA was the sole provider of health, education and emergency assistance and registration services for Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic in Jordan. The Agency continued to appeal to the Government of Jordan to uphold the principle of non-refoulement and equal treatment of all refugees, in accordance with international standards, and to consider temporary access for Palestine refugees fleeing the war in the Syrian Arab Republic, for humanitarian reasons.

[8] UNRWA serves an additional 103,535 other registered persons in Jordan.

## B. Operational and organizational developments

19. In 2015, UNRWA was able to deliver human development and humanitarian assistance rapidly and effectively by drawing on its operational strengths, in particular its 30,000-strong workforce, the majority of whom were Palestine refugees and members of the communities that they served.

20. The Agency succeeded in educating 500,698 children, providing more than 9.1 million consultations of primary health care, social safety net assistance (including cash and food) to almost 294,000 persons, learning and skills training to 6,855 youth, and microfinance loans to more than 38,000 people. More than 36,000 shelters were either rehabilitated or constructed. Emergency humanitarian assistance was provided to more than 1.2 million refugees, primarily in the occupied Palestinian territory and the Syrian Arab Republic.

21. During 2015, UNRWA continued to foster positive institutional changes and implement comprehensive programme reforms to improve medium-term strategic planning, resource mobilization, accountability and the quality and effectiveness of services provided to Palestine refugees. The education reform brought about changes to classroom practices that improved learning outcomes. Under the health reform, the Agency-wide adoption of the family health team approach[9] and the implementation of the health management information system "e-Health" contributed to improvements in health care. The Agency also continued to embed gender equality in its core programming and further mainstreamed an effective response to gender-based violence across all areas of operations. Significant progress was also achieved with regard to the further development of the UNRWA policy framework on protection. The Agency also enhanced operational efficiency through the introduction in April 2015 of a new enterprise resource planning system to provide an integrated information system across the areas of finance, public sector management, supply chain management and human resources.

22. In Gaza, UNRWA continued to support reconstruction efforts following destructions that had occurred during the hostilities that occurred in 2014. While the Agency estimates the cost of rebuilding the more than 140,000 damaged or destroyed Palestine refugee homes at $720 million, only $247 million had been pledged by the end of 2015. Within those limits, UNRWA was coordinating reconstruction efforts with other United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organizations and the national consensus Government to ensure an effective response. The need for accountability to the victims remained unaddressed.

23. UNRWA continued to provide humanitarian assistance to Palestine refugees in Gaza who had suffered further displacement because of the hostilities of 2014, including the repair and reconstruction of damaged homes, an activity that gradually increased during the year, following the establishment of the Gaza reconstruction mechanism in 2014. During the first half of 2015, the 18,259 internally displaced persons residing in UNRWA collective centres[10] gradually moved to alternative accommodation. While the last collective centre closed on 17 June 2015, at the end

[9] A person-centred approach to the delivery of primary health care.
[10] Figure as of January 2015.

of that year, an estimated 16,000 families (almost 90,000 individuals) remained displaced as a result of the hostilities of 2014.

24. The Agency continued to invest in education by providing access to more than 250,000 students through 257 schools in Gaza, around 73.9 per cent of which continued to run on a double-shift basis.

25. In the West Bank, UNRWA provided basic education to 50,566 children and vocational and technical training to 1,773 students. In response to escalating violence during the last quarter of 2015, UNRWA enhanced programmatic interventions, including the provision of psychosocial assistance, to mitigate the effects of the current situation on children, as well as advocacy efforts calling for action to prevent a further escalation of violence. UNRWA continued to provide social safety net support to an average of 36,139 refugees throughout the year in the form of in-kind food assistance, emergency assistance through food vouchers, in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP), and cash for work opportunities to more than 16,400 other poor households (95,077 individuals). UNRWA also partnered with WFP to provide in-kind food support for 85 vulnerable Bedouin refugee communities, totalling some 32,000 individuals. In addition, 43 health centres and health points, along with six emergency mobile health clinics, provided more than 1.4 million medical consultations throughout the West Bank.

26. In the Syrian Arab Republic, UNRWA maintained its health, education, vocational training, microfinance, youth support and social services, adapting them to the constrained circumstances of armed conflict by utilizing its comprehensive network of staff, facilities and resources. Forty-four UNRWA schools continued to operate, down from 118 before the crisis, complemented by 55 afternoon-shift schools hosted in facilities of the Ministry of Education. In total, 45,802 students were accommodated. Fifteen of the 23 UNRWA health centres remained operational, supplemented by an additional 11 health points throughout the country. As of December 2015, nine UNRWA school buildings, the Damascus Training Centre and two other UNRWA installations continued to serve as temporary accommodation for 4,795 internally displaced civilians. In the northern part of the country, home to some 50,000 Palestine refugees, including the displaced people, UNRWA maintained services and humanitarian assistance in the face of incessant armed conflict.

27. In the midst of funding shortfalls, the Agency was only able to provide refugees with three out of six rounds of cash assistance in the Syrian Arab Republic, covering just six months of needs. Food assistance covered individual nutritional requirements for only five months. For those refugees able to find employment, the average daily wage was 1,125 Syrian pounds (equivalent to $3 in December 2015). Health, education and other public services have been severely affected by the conflict.

28. Approximately 80 per cent of Palestine refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic reside in Damascus, including in areas with restricted humanitarian access. UNRWA sustained regular and emergency operations in most parts of Damascus during 2015. Major difficulties were encountered in reaching refugee communities in Yarmuk, Khan al-Shih, Qudsaya and Ramadan. UNRWA aid deliveries to Yarmuk were halted in April owing to the capture of the area by extremist armed groups, while access to adjacent areas was suspended on 23 September. In July, more than 6,000 Palestine refugee families were able to return to Husayniyah after being displaced for more than two years. UNRWA successfully resumed all services in

Husayniyah, reopening the health centre, the community centre and four schools serving more than 3,300 students, some of whom had missed more than two years of education. In the central area, UNRWA services to Palestine refugees in Hama, Homs and Ladhiqiyah remained fully operational, with humanitarian assistance regularly supplied from Damascus.

29. A majority of the 458,369 registered Palestine refugees[11] in Lebanon depend on UNRWA service provision as, through either law or practice, they are effectively denied access to most public services. In addition, 41,000 Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic in Lebanon are particularly vulnerable, given border restrictions, their precarious legal status, difficulties in regularizing their stay and limited social protection services. An estimated 93 per cent of the latter refugees are highly dependent on UNRWA for a broad range of regular and humanitarian assistance.

30. In 2015, UNRWA operations in Lebanon provided critical basic services to Palestine refugees, including the provision of basic education to 38,173 students, primary health care through 27 health centres and referrals to child protection, gender-based violence and psychosocial support services. Social safety net support was provided to 61,709 poor refugees, as well as access to microcredit initiatives and vocational training opportunities for 1,100 people. UNRWA supported refugee employability through targeted vocational training and advocacy with stakeholders to promote employment. Further support was extended through the provision of potable water for camp inhabitants and the rehabilitation of 430 shelters. Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic were also supported through access to UNRWA health and education services and direct humanitarian assistance. An average of 41,882 of those refugees received cash for food assistance under an UNRWA-WFP partnership, while 11,748 families received housing assistance for six months and 10,735 received critical winterization assistance. UNRWA also supported responses to displacement caused by violent confrontations in Ayn al-Hilwah in mid-2015 and made progress in addressing challenges in the reconstruction of Nahr el-Bared camp, ensuring that at least 50 per cent of the refugees could re-establish residence. UNRWA has, as a matter of priority, continued to seek urgently needed support to finalize the construction work and assist displaced refugees.

31. In Jordan, UNRWA services continued to contribute to the human development of refugees in 2015 through the provision of basic education to some 119,606 children, including 1,468 Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic, higher education to 1,213 students and technical and vocational training for 2,246 youth. Twenty-five health centres and one local health-oriented non-governmental organization provided 1,598,989 primary health-care consultations. Social safety net support was afforded to 58,937 special hardship cases. Regular cash assistance for food and non-food items was provided to meet the critical needs of families of Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic. However, owing to funding constraints, it was not possible to offer winterization and shelter assistance. Access to microcredit initiatives was extended to 7,065 refugees. One hundred and thirty-three of the poorest refugee families benefited from shelter rehabilitation assistance.

[11] UNRWA serves an additional 46,007 other registered persons in Lebanon.

## C. Legal matters

### Legal status of Palestine refugees in the Agency's areas of operations

32. The legal status of Palestine refugees in Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip remained substantially the same as that described in the report of the Commissioner-General for 2008 (A/64/13, paras. 52-55).

### Agency staff

33. Israeli authorities, citing security concerns, continued to restrict the freedom of movement of UNRWA personnel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. Restrictions included closures of the West Bank and Gaza, the prohibition for local staff not resident in Jerusalem to travel in United Nations vehicles across the Erez crossing or the Allenby Bridge, or to drive in Israel and East Jerusalem, and time-consuming and cumbersome procedures for obtaining permits for local staff not resident in Jerusalem to enter Israel and East Jerusalem. On many occasions, permits were not granted even though procedures had been followed. On average, permits to enter East Jerusa'lem from the rest of the West Bank were not issued to 18 per cent (105 individuals) of the Agency personnel who needed them.

34. Israeli procedures at the Allenby Bridge continued to request that United Nations vehicles be submitted to a search unless an occupant thereof held an identification card issued by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, even though such searches represent a violation of the immunity of the United Nations. Those procedures particularly restricted the movement of international staff based at UNRWA headquarters in Amman, to whom the Ministry does not issue such cards.

35. Israeli procedures at the Erez crossing continued to request that United Nations vehicles be submitted to a search unless the occupants thereof included a United Nations staff member holding a diplomatic visa or was driven by an international staff member on a limited list approved by the Israeli authorities, even though such searches represent a violation of the immunity of the United Nations. Opening hours at the Erez crossing remained restricted. On 31 occasions at various checkpoints in the West Bank, including for entry into East Jerusalem, Israeli authorities demanded to search an Agency vehicle. While the majority of searches were avoided through Agency interventions, rerouting or turning back, on seven occasions searches were carried out. UNRWA protested against those searches as a violation of the immunity of the United Nations.

36. The restrictions mentioned above are inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 1946, relevant United Nations resolutions and the Comay-Michelmore Agreement of 1967, by which the Government of Israel is obligated to facilitate the task of UNRWA to the best of its ability, subject only to regulations or arrangements that may be necessitated by considerations of military security. UNRWA applied for permits for local staff to enter East Jerusalem for operational and humanitarian reasons only and without prejudice to relevant United Nations resolutions, including resolutions relating to the status of Jerusalem. Israeli authorities maintained that the restrictions were necessary to protect Israel against terrorist attacks.

37. In the West Bank, staff movement continued to be restricted and unpredictable at several checkpoints, notably those controlling access to East Jerusalem or through the West Bank barrier. In 2015, movement restrictions in the West Bank resulted in the loss of at least 75 staff days. It remained difficult to deliver Agency services in the area between the West Bank barrier and the armistice line of 1949. During 2015, Israeli authorities continued to insist that Agency and other United Nations trucks use specific commercial checkpoints to enter Jerusalem. The Agency's position remains that United Nations trucks should have unrestricted access through checkpoints in the West Bank, including those operated by the border police, in line with the long-standing practice before September 2014 and in recognition of humanitarian access needs.

38. Local staff in Gaza required permits from the Israeli authorities to transit the Erez crossing. During 2015, of 983 applications, 828 permits (84 per cent) were granted. Compared with 2014, the number of permits applied for increased by approximately 9 per cent, while the overall percentage of permit applications rejected decreased from 18 to 16 per cent.

39. In 2015, the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza was open for public use for 26 of 365 scheduled days. The ban imposed by the United Nations on duty travel for staff members travelling through Rafah remained in place, owing to the security situation in the Sinai. One staff member was allowed to cross in February 2015.

40. In Lebanon, the volatile security situation in Palestine refugee camps in the Sayda area and north Lebanon area resulted at times in movement restrictions that affected Agency staff and operations. During 2015, no significant movement restrictions were imposed on UNRWA staff by the Governments of Jordan or the State of Palestine. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the armed conflict intensified during 2015 with growing engagement and military action from a variety of actors, increasing unpredictability and the continued use of heavy weapons and weapons of indiscriminate impact. Generalized insecurity seriously affected free movement and humanitarian access. Two staff members were injured in gunfire or as a result of shelling in 2015. Numerous checkpoints remained in place, including in and around Damascus. Agency vehicles were searched at some checkpoints, in violation of the immunity of the United Nations. The Agency applied for 150 visas (residency and visit) for international personnel, including renewals, of which 13 were not granted.

41. At the end of 2015, 35 staff members were missing, detained, kidnapped or presumed to be detained: 28 were believed to be missing, detained or kidnapped by the Syrian authorities or other parties, 3 were detained by the Israeli authorities, 1 was detained by the Palestinian authorities, 1 was detained by the de facto authorities in Gaza and 2 were detained by the Jordanian authorities. Despite requests by the Agency, made in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/232, in 2015, the Syrian authorities provided reasons for the detention of 7 staff members but did not grant the Agency access to them. The Jordanian authorities granted access to and information on 1 detained staff member.

42. The Israeli authorities continued to impose transit charges on shipments entering the Gaza Strip, forcing UNRWA to pay $1,460,120 in 2015. In the view of the Agency, those charges constitute a direct tax from which it ought to be exempt under the 1946 Convention. In the view of Israel, the charges are a fee for services, from which there is no exemption. The Kerem Shalom crossing remained the sole crossing for UNRWA imports into Gaza. It was closed for imports for 18 of

261 scheduled operating days (6.9 per cent). The continuing closure of the Karni crossing contributed to increased expenditure, resulting from storage, palletization, sterilization, extra mileage and additional staff, amounting to some $5.9 million, in addition to transit charges levied at the Kerem Shalom crossing.

43. As a result of the amended framework between Israel and the United Nations agreed on 4 December 2013, stricter conditions relating to Israeli security concerns continued to be imposed on UNRWA regarding the monitoring of construction material. One of the consequences was that UNRWA continued to employ an additional international staff member (in addition to using its extant international staff workforce), local staff engineers and security guards to meet the daily monitoring requirements of Israel, which amounted to more than $1.2 million in extra staffing costs for the Agency in 2015. Starting in 2015, the Agency was also required to provide Israeli authorities with written confirmation of the monitoring by UNRWA of each project, in addition to requirements predating 2015 for documentary material to facilitate the monitoring by Israel of construction projects. In 2015 alone, additional staffing, transit and logistical costs resulting from Israeli requirements regarding access and monitoring of all Agency imports into the Gaza Strip amounted to almost $8.6 million. That amount does not include similar access costs that private contractors have incurred for shipping construction materials into Gaza through Kerem Shalom under the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism.

44. In 2015, Israeli approval time for Agency construction projects in Gaza was noticeably reduced compared with 2013 and 2014. Coordination for certain aggregates was no longer required as at 1 November 2015. Since the addition of wood to the list of restricted items in April 2015, and to its further limitation in August 2015 to wood no thicker than 1 cm, UNRWA has not received any of the wood needed for its projects.

**Agency services and premises**

45. Israeli authorities continued to require standards testing for educational, electronic, medical and other items for official use. UNRWA imports goods for official use that conform to international standards and the United Nations considers that Israeli requirements are contrary to the exemption from prohibitions and restrictions on imports, under the 1946 Convention, in respect of articles imported by the United Nations for its official use. As at the end of 2015, 15 consignments destined for the West Bank were still detained, with the duration of detainment ranging between four and six years for each consignment. The total storage costs for consignments delayed during the year exceeded $156,300.

46. Arrears of $90.9 million due to the Agency for services and goods procured for the West Bank and Gaza are outstanding for the reimbursement of value added tax (VAT) accrued before the arrangements agreed to in 2013, as previously reported by the Commissioner-General. Outstanding VAT reimbursement in relation to the 2015 financial year amounted to $2.66 million, while total outstandings amounted to approximately $99.4 million as at 31 December 2015.

47. The Agency was required, as in the past, to pay port fees and other charges to the Syrian authorities, in contravention to the agreement of 1948 between the United Nations and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. In 2015, fees and charges totalling $18,318 were paid.

48. The Agency continued to face difficulties in obtaining exemptions from customs and other governmental fees from the Customs Department of the Ministry of Finance of Jordan for the import of vehicles for official use. UNRWA considers those restrictions to be contrary to the Agency's exemption from restrictions on imports under the 1946 Convention and its bilateral agreement with Jordan of 1951. Jordan considers those charges as fees for service. Since 2012, the Drivers and Vehicles Licensing Department of the Ministry of Finance has requested payment for the inspection of and registration cards for official UNRWA vehicles, which the Agency protested against as constituting a direct tax from which it is exempt. UNRWA paid the inspection and registration card fees under protest in the absence of any government response. The Agency also faced delays in obtaining construction permits for its installations.

49. The Operations Support Officer programme continued in the West Bank, Lebanon and Gaza and was established in Jordan in early 2015. In addition, an Area Support Officer programme was established in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2015. The Operations Support Officer programme played an invaluable role in upholding the neutrality of the United Nations, including through the inspection of UNRWA installations and conducting ongoing training for staff on humanitarian principles. In the West Bank, the programme also facilitated transit for UNRWA staff, vehicles and goods through checkpoints and access to areas affected by Israeli military or security operations.

50. The 1946 Convention provides that the premises of the United Nations are inviolable. In contravention to this, the Israeli military and security forces entered UNRWA premises in the West Bank without authorization or coordination on six occasions. On at least 41 occasions, tear gas canisters, stun grenades, plastic-coated metal bullets or live ammunition used by the Israeli security forces landed in UNRWA compounds or damaged UNRWA installations, resulting in three UNRWA staff getting injured and several others suffering from tear gas inhalation. In addition, one guard was injured by a plastic-coated metal bullet while on duty outside an installation and one staff member was injured while driving to duty in a private vehicle. In Gaza, there were 117 reported incursions and other incidents that affected UNRWA installations. On 23 occasions, demonstrations or sit-ins were held at UNRWA installations. Most instances, however, related to beneficiaries entering installations, refusing to leave or disrupting or assaulting staff members.

51. In 2015, the Secretary-General released a summary of findings by the United Nations Headquarters Board of Inquiry regarding certain incidents that had occurred in Gaza between 8 July and 26 August 2014. The Board of Inquiry found that all seven incidents in which UNRWA schools had either been hit or struck by projectiles or other munitions were attributable to the Israel Defense Forces. In addition, the Board of Inquiry investigated three incidents in which weapon components had been placed in three other UNRWA schools, closed for the summer break and not serving as designated emergency shelters, finding that, in two cases, unidentified armed Palestinian groups had hidden weapons in the schools. With regard to the third school, the Board of Inquiry found that it was highly likely that unidentified armed Palestinian groups had hidden weapons there as well. During the reporting period, UNRWA began implementing the recommendations of the Board of Inquiry regarding safety, security, neutrality and communication.

52. The General Staff mechanism for fact-finding assessments established by the Israel Defense Forces in 2014 continued to examine exceptional incidents that had occurred during the hostilities in Gaza, including the seven incidents affecting UNRWA schools. As of the end of 2015, the Military Advocate General had ordered criminal investigations into two of the seven incidents. UNRWA continued to advocate for accountability for violations of international law based on credible, prompt, independent, impartial and thorough investigations.

53. In the West Bank, there were seven incursions by armed Palestinians or Palestinian security forces, including three incidents during which armed Palestinians entered a UNRWA installation and four incidents during which live ammunition deployed by Palestinian security forces or armed Palestinians landed in or hit UNRWA installations. There were four misuses of UNRWA installations for unauthorized political or other events involving Palestinian factions, camp services committee members or other actors. There were additional incidents in which Palestine refugees, including members of camp services committees, prevented UNRWA staff from performing their duties, attacked staff or property or held unauthorized protests in Agency installations, primarily to protest against the criteria for eligibility for UNRWA services.

54. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the Agency has sustained conflict-related property losses in the millions of dollars since hostilities began in 2011, including in relation to at least 46 of 180 UNRWA facilities that were either damaged or destroyed and 22 vehicles that were damaged, destroyed or stolen. During 2015, there were five incidents of shelling affecting UNRWA premises, causing damage to four premises and the total destruction of one disused UNRWA school. There were also three incidents of small arms fire affecting UNRWA installations that damaged two facilities and, in one incident, injured several refugees. Damage to and the lack of safe access to UNRWA facilities made it more difficult for Palestine refugees to obtain essential services. The Agency remained unable to verify reports regarding the military use of certain UNRWA installations in that country owing to insecurity and the presence of armed groups in the areas concerned. Despite protests, the UNRWA sanitation office in Khan Dannun continued to be used by military personnel from the adjacent checkpoint.

55. In Lebanon, there were 129 days of closures of different UNRWA installations in 2015. This was mainly due to protests by discontented refugees, but also to civil unrest and armed fighting among factions. In particular, such fighting in Ein El Hilweh refugee camp from 22 to 26 August 2015 led to the closure of all UNRWA installations inside the camp until it was considered safe, on 31 August 2015. There were incursions into six UNRWA installations, five of which were used for an extended period. In addition, several installations were damaged as a result of weapons fire. The damage to installations is estimated at $123,000. UNRWA has protested against those incidents and liaised with relevant authorities and Palestinian leaders during and after the events.

**Other matters**

56. On 15 February 2012, approximately $74,000 was seized from the Agency's HSBC bank account in Jordan on the basis of an order by the Jordanian Execution Office. Despite numerous requests and protests to the Government before and after the seizure, the funds had not been returned at the end of 2015. On 4 December

2015, the Jordanian Execution Office issued an execution order in respect of an adverse judgment against UNRWA in the amount of $24,400, in relation to a claim filed by a former UNRWA staff member.

57. $680,000 seized by the Government of Lebanon in 2013 has yet to be returned.

58. UNRWA continued to dispute any liability for payment demanded by the Government of Lebanon in the sum of $167.4 million for electricity consumed by Palestine refugees outside of UNRWA installations in camps in Lebanon.

59. In relation to the internal justice system, the UNRWA Dispute Tribunal, established on 1 June 2010, operates on a full-time basis and is comprised of one judge and a part-time ad litem judge. During the reporting period, the Tribunal issued 58 judgments and 128 orders, disposing of 75 cases. At the end of 2015, 57 cases were pending, of which 56 had been filed by area staff and one by an international staff member. There were also 17 appeals pending before the United Nations Appeals Tribunal.

## D. Financial overview

60. With the exception of 150 international staff posts funded by the General Assembly through the United Nations regular budget, UNRWA operations are funded by voluntary contributions. The Agency receives funding through: (a) a programme budget fund that supports core operations (including recurrent staff and non-staff costs), such as education, health, camp improvement, relief and social services and microfinance programmes, and support systems and structures; (b) specific, time-bound projects with a view to improving services without increasing recurrent costs; and (c) emergency appeals for humanitarian interventions.

61. During 2015, UNRWA widened its donor base, strengthened relations with Arab donor States,[12] engaged new private partners, continued to build its presence in emerging markets[13] and deepened relations with traditional donors.[14] In 2015, Agency resource mobilization efforts yielded a total pledged amount of $1.24 billion. While this represents a decrease from the 2014 pledge of $1.32 billion, had exchange rates not fluctuated, 2015 funds for UNRWA would have represented the highest ever level of contributions. Arab donor States contributed substantially to the overall budget with a total pledge of $204 million, including 9.3 per cent of the programme budget, up nearly 4 per cent from 2014.

62. Contributions from private partnerships rose from 0.2 per cent in 2011 to 1.8 per cent in 2015, a notable achievement attributable to the strong resource mobilization efforts by UNRWA national committees and contributions from a certain number of large Islamic foundations. Significant needs arose in 2015, exacerbated by the continued conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and residual needs stemming from the hostilities in Gaza in 2014. In its Syria regional crisis emergency appeal of 2015, UNRWA made an appeal for $415 million. Many donors responded generously, although only 51 per cent of funding needs were met. In the

[12] Sixteen Arab bilateral donor States and Arab non-governmental organizations.

[13] Nineteen countries, including Brazil, China, India, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Thailand and various South-East Asian and South American countries.

[14] Members of the UNRWA Advisory Commission in January 2010 (17 countries and the European Union).

occupied Palestinian territory, the Agency continued to provide basic humanitarian assistance through an emergency appeal for $414 million, 47 per cent of which had been funded by the end of 2015.

63. According to unaudited financial statements, the Agency expended $1,333.8 million in 2015. The largest expenditure was $766.7 million, under the unrestricted regular budget, accounting for 55.4 per cent of total expenditure, while restricted fund activities, emergency activities and projects accounted for 1.3 per cent, 30.3 per cent and 12.4 per cent of total expenditure, respectively.[15] Education remained the largest programme funded from the programme budget, with an expenditure of $437.4 million, or 57.05 per cent of the total unrestricted programme budget.

64. The overall ability of UNRWA to respond to challenges that arose during the reporting period was threatened by a $101 million funding shortfall that risked a delay in the opening of all UNRWA schools for the 2015/16 school year. Through the generosity of numerous donor partners, this risk was averted. Inadequate funding forced the Agency to implement further austerity measures, including the terminations of consultants' contracts, reductions in travel and the suspension of capital expenditure.

[15] These subtotals amounted to 99.4 per cent, the remainder being dedicated to microfinance programming.

## Table 1
## Actual expenditure by field of operations and programme, 2015
(Thousands of United States dollars)

| | Gaza | | Jordan | | Lebanon | | Syrian Arab Republic | | West Bank | | Headquarters | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Programme budget* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* |
| Education | 205 284.66 | 26.78 | 94 578.05 | 12.34 | 47 282.92 | 6.17 | 19 813.15 | 2.58 | 67 809.28 | 8.84 | 2 624.82 | 0.34 | 437 392.88 | 57.05 |
| Health | 26 897.71 | 3.51 | 22 613.59 | 2.95 | 27 145.25 | 3.54 | 6 374.41 | 0.83 | 27 436.56 | 3.58 | 745.22 | 0.10 | 111 212.74 | 14.51 |
| Infrastructure | 11 896.68 | 1.55 | 5 002.53 | 0.65 | 5 846.80 | 0.76 | 1 078.84 | 0.14 | 6 259.58 | 0.82 | 1 502.14 | 0.20 | 31 586.57 | 4.12 |
| Relief and social services | 14 411.78 | 1.88 | 7 295.07 | 0.95 | 8 748.90 | 1.14 | 2 331.35 | 0.30 | 8 702.72 | 1.14 | 1 070.08 | 0.14 | 42 559.90 | 5.55 |
| Executive and support | 39 326.73 | 5.13 | 9 955.17 | 1.30 | 12 431.17 | 1.62 | 6 319.17 | 0.82 | 23 763.16 | 3.10 | 52 137.51 | 6.80 | 143 932.91 | 18.77 |
| **Grand total** | **297 817.56** | **38.84** | **139 444.41** | **18.19** | **101 455.04** | **13.23** | **35 916.92** | **4.68** | **133 971.30** | **17.47** | **58 079.76** | **7.58** | **766 685.00** | **100.00** |

| | Gaza | | Jordan | | Lebanon | | Syrian Arab Republic | | West Bank | | Headquarters | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *All funding streams* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* | | *(Percentage)* |
| Education programme | 249 291.27 | 17.79 | 104 412.81 | 7.48 | 58 878.19 | 4.22 | 36 126.15 | 2.59 | 75 817.35 | 5.43 | 3 961.40 | 0.28 | 528 487.17 | 37.78 |
| Health programme | 47 073.66 | 3.37 | 23 346.98 | 1.67 | 35 558.35 | 2.55 | 10 703.42 | 0.77 | 34 899.70 | 2.50 | 1 677.70 | 0.12 | 153 259.80 | 10.98 |
| Infrastructure and camp improvement programme | 23 833.15 | 1.71 | 5 193.02 | 0.37 | 25 576.89 | 1.83 | 1 724.15 | 0.12 | 8 950.44 | 0.64 | 1 657.56 | 0.12 | 66 935.21 | 4.79 |
| Relief and social services programme | 217 229.12 | 15.56 | 18 700.08 | 1.34 | 43 072.20 | 3.08 | 118 140.01 | 8.46 | 20 965.25 | 1.50 | 1 417.65 | 0.10 | 419 524.32 | 30.05 |
| Executive and support programme | 89 660.83 | 6.33 | 11 554.36 | 0.83 | 19 305.99 | 1.38 | 22 209.85 | 1.57 | 36 738.77 | 2.48 | 57 555.61 | 3.80 | 237 025.42 | 16.40 |
| **Grand total** | **627 088.04** | **44.76** | **163 207.26** | **11.69** | **182 391.64** | **13.06** | **188 903.58** | **13.51** | **177 371.51** | **12.55** | **66 269.91** | **4.43** | **1 405 231.92** | **100.00** |

## Table 2
## Actual expenditure by strategic goal

(Thousands of United States dollars)

| Programme budget | Gaza | | Jordan | | Lebanon | | Syrian Arab Republic | | West Bank | | Headquarters | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) |
| A long and healthy life | 48 324.51 | 6.30 | 27 132.75 | 3.54 | 32 295.04 | 4.21 | 7 211.82 | 0.94 | 32 422.70 | 4.23 | 1 591.23 | 0.21 | 148 978.04 | 19.43 |
| Acquired knowledge and skills | 185 646.35 | 24.21 | 88 308.40 | 11.52 | 43 512.38 | 5.68 | 17 864.59 | 2.33 | 61 646.80 | 8.04 | 2 623.41 | 0.34 | 399 601.92 | 52.12 |
| A decent standard of living | 22 742.26 | 2.97 | 12 584.18 | 1.64 | 12 108.42 | 1.58 | 3 512.08 | 0.46 | 14 140.39 | 1.84 | 1 533.56 | 0.20 | 66 620.89 | 8.69 |
| Human rights enjoyed to the fullest | 1 888.85 | 0.25 | 980.55 | 0.13 | 474.40 | 0.06 | 659.47 | 0.09 | 1 195.70 | 0.16 | 194.07 | 0.03 | 5 393.03 | 0.70 |
| Management and operational effectiveness | 39 215.60 | 5 11 | 10 438.54 | 1.36 | 13 064.81 | 1.70 | 6 668.96 | 0.87 | 24 565.71 | 3.20 | 52 137.51 | 6.80 | 146 091.13 | 19.05 |
| **Grand total** | **297 817.56** | **38.84** | **139 444.41** | **18.19** | **101 455.04** | **13.23** | **35 916.92** | **4.68** | **133 971.30** | **17.47** | **58 079.76** | **7.58** | **766 685.00** | **100.00** |

| All funding streams | Gaza | | Jordan | | Lebanon | | Syrian Arab Republic | | West Bank | | Headquarters | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) |
| A long and healthy life | 87 141.27 | 6.20 | 32 323.63 | 2.30 | 37 699.97 | 2.68 | 24 387.10 | 1.74 | 35 721.58 | 2.54 | 7 150.13 | 0.51 | 224 423.68 | 15.97 |
| Acquired knowledge and skills | 192 598.22 | 13.71 | 91 095.65 | 6.48 | 43 960.49 | 3.13 | 21 207.09 | 1.51 | 63 765.89 | 4.54 | 3 018.03 | 0.21 | 415 645.37 | 29.58 |
| A decent standard of living | 67 630.61 | 4.81 | 17 889.41 | 1.27 | 20 262.69 | 1.44 | 18 345.45 | 1.31 | 19 190.32 | 1.37 | 2 669.30 | 0.19 | 145 987.78 | 10.39 |
| Human rights enjoyed to the fullest | 19 318.34 | 1.37 | 1 730.61 | 0.12 | 14 645.06 | 1.04 | 5 277.58 | 0.38 | 9 696.79 | 0.69 | 1 126.54 | 0.08 | 51 794.93 | 3.69 |

| All funding streams | Gaza | | Jordan | | Lebanon | | Syrian Arab Republic | | West Bank | | Headquarters | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | | (Percentage) | |
| Management and operational effectiveness | 260 399.59 | 18.53 | 20 167.95 | 1.44 | 65 823.43 | 4.68 | 119 686.36 | 8.52 | 48 996.92 | 3.49 | 52 305.91 | 3.72 | 567 380.16 | 40.38 |
| **Grand total** | **627 088.04** | **44.63** | **163 207.26** | **11.61** | **182 391.63** | **12.98** | **188 903.58** | **13.44** | **177 371.51** | **12.55** | **66 269.91** | **4.72** | **1 405 231.92** | **100.00** |

# Chapter II
## Subprogramme review presented within the framework of the human development goals of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees

65. In 2015, UNRWA continued to follow the framework set out in its medium-term strategy for 2010-2015. The strategy provides direction for the Agency on the basis of 15 strategic objectives, each of which contributes to one or more of four human development goals: a long and healthy life; acquired knowledge and skills; a decent standard of living; and human rights enjoyed to the fullest.

### A. Goal 1
### A long and healthy life

66. In 2015, UNRWA continued to deliver primary health care to Palestine refugees through 143 health centres. Despite gains with regard to average daily medical consultations, antenatal care and antibiotic prescription rates, non-communicable diseases contributed to a mounting burden of diseases, which are costly to treat and manage. In response, UNRWA introduced new tests, medicines and public awareness initiatives to promote the prevention and management of non-communicable diseases. In addition, the Agency made progress in rolling out health reforms, including the family health team approach and a health management information system ("e-Health"). By the end of 2015, 115 of the 117 UNRWA health centres (excluding the Syrian Arab Republic) had successfully implemented the family health team reform, while 80 health centres were implementing e-Health. Improvements in health centre organization, patient waiting times and patient-staff satisfaction were evident, in addition to decreases in health centre staff workloads.

67. In the Syrian Arab Republic, UNRWA prioritized the provision of essential, life-saving care. Relative stability in Damascus allowed the Agency to commence to implement the family health team reform in six health centres, with the expected introduction of e-Health in 2016. The conflict continued to place an additional burden on surrounding fields of UNRWA operation, in particular Lebanon, where the situation necessitated the hiring of additional health-care staff to manage the increased number of Palestine refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic.

68. UNRWA also engaged in improving the overall public health environment through the rehabilitation of water supply, sewerage and drainage systems in priority areas, in appropriate cooperation with local authorities and without prejudice to the Agency's position concerning the responsibility of host authorities to administer the camps.

**Strategic objective 1**
**To ensure universal access to quality, comprehensive primary health care**

| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicator of achievement* | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Unit of measure* | *Percentage* |
| Universal access to good-quality, comprehensive primary health care | Antibiotic prescription rate | Baseline (2015) | 26.0 |
| | | Target (2015) | 25.0 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 24.7[a] |

[a] Including the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Strategic objective 2**
**To protect and promote family health**

| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicator of achievement* | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Unit of measure* | *Percentage* |
| Sustained protection and promotion of family health | Infant mortality rate | Baseline (2015) | 22 |
| | | Target (2015) | 18 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 18[a] |

[a] Excluding the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Strategic objective 3**
**To prevent and control diseases**

| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicators of achievement* | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Unit of measure* | *Percentage* |
| Improved alignment of communicable disease prevalence with host authorities | (a) Immunization coverage rate against vaccine-preventable diseases | Baseline (2015) | 99.5 |
| | | Target (2015) | 99.5 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 99.3[a] |
| | (b) Percentage of shelters formally connected to the public water network | Baseline (2015) | 99.9 |
| | | Target (2015) | 99.9 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 100[b] |
| | (c) Percentage of shelters formally connected to the public sewerage network | Baseline (2015) | 84.0 |
| | | Target (2015) | 87.2 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 87.3[b] |

[a] Including the Syrian Arab Republic.
[b] Excluding the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Outputs**

- Provision of 9,191,921 medical consultations to Palestine refugees, almost 60 per cent of which were provided to females
- 1,051,195 consultations provided in the Syrian Arab Republic, despite the conflict

- The rate of women attending four antenatal care visits increased to 90.2 per cent, compared with 86.8 per cent in 2014
- 245,682 patients suffering from a non-communicable disease were assisted in UNRWA health centres in 2015, a 6.3 per cent increase compared with 2014
- Subsidies were provided to 108,088 hospitalization patients for secondary or tertiary health care
- Almost 100 per cent of refugee homes (excluding the Syrian Arab Republic) are connected to a water network (water quality remains a concern), and 87.3 per cent to a sewage network
- The average rate of daily medical consultations per doctor declined across most areas of UNRWA operation in 2015 from 95 in 2014 to 86 in 2015
- 10 health centres were either renovated or in the process of being renovated to improve the health-care environment

## B. Goal 2
## Acquired knowledge and skills

69. UNRWA operates 692 elementary and preparatory schools across its five fields of operations, providing free basic education to more than half a million refugee children. Literacy rates among Palestine refugees compare well with regional and global levels, and there has been gender balance in enrolment since the 1960s. Education reforms launched in 2011 sought to transform classroom practices towards enhanced student learning and addressed policy, organizational structure and capacity development.

70. Progress was made ensuring inclusivity of all children and emphasizing critical learning processes and key values, in line with the World Programme for Human Rights Education. This was achieved through the interrelated elements of the reform, including professional development for education staff.

71. Construction was completed or was ongoing for 42 new schools or extensions, with designs being developed for a further 29 schools and extensions.

**Strategic objective 4**
**To ensure universal access to and coverage of basic education**

| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicators of achievement* | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Unit of measure* | *Ratio* |
| Universal access and coverage of basic education | (a) Dropout rate for elementary schools | | |
| | Male | Baseline (2015) | 3.38 |
| | | Target (2015) | 2.40 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 1.95[a] |
| | Female | Baseline (2015) | 1.78 |
| | | Target (2015) | 1.40 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 0.96[a] |

| Expected accomplishment | Indicators of achievement | Measurement | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Unit of measure | Ratio |
| | (b) Dropout rate for preparatory schools | | |
| | Male | Baseline (2015) | 4.75 |
| | | Target (2015) | 5.50 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 3.55[a] |
| | Female | Baseline (2015) | 2.99 |
| | | Target (2015) | 4.70 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 2.92[a] |

[a] Excluding the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Strategic objective 5**
**To enhance educational quality and outcomes against set standards**

| Expected accomplishment | Indicator of achievement | Measurement | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Unit of measure | Percentage |
| Improved monitoring of good-quality education delivery | Percentage change in the mean score obtained by students on the monitoring learning achievement test[a] | Baseline (2015) | 3 |
| | | Target (2015) | – |
| | | Actual (2015) | – |

[a] The monitoring learning achievement test was last conducted in 2013 and is next slated for 2016. Consequently, there are no data to report for 2015.

**Strategic objective 6**
**To improve access to educational opportunities for learners with special educational needs**

| Expected accomplishment | Indicator of achievement | Measurement | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Unit of measure | Percentage |
| Improved assessment and referral of special educational needs students | Percentage of all children enrolled in UNRWA schools identified as having a special education need | Baseline (2015) | 3.70 |
| | | Target (2015) | 2.90 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 1.88[a] |

[a] Excluding the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Outputs**

- General education provided to 500,698 Palestine refugee children
- Across key education reform indicators: (a) student survival rates in the basic education cycle are at the highest that they have been in the past five years; (b) Agency-wide cumulative dropout rates for elementary boys and girls and preparatory boys are at the lowest that they have been in the past five years; and (c) the coefficient of internal efficiency[16] is at its highest since the reform

[16] Internal efficiency is the ideal number of years to graduate a child from the system expressed as a percentage of the actual number of years required.

began, which means that the UNRWA education system has become more efficient with more students graduating on time

- The reform has led to numerous achievements, from a clearly articulated direction provided through Agency-wide policies (such as the Teacher Policy, the Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Tolerance Policy and the Inclusive Education Policy) to the strategies guiding the implementation of those policies (the Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Tolerance Teacher's Toolkit, the Inclusive Education Teacher's Toolkit, the Common Monitoring Framework, the Research Strategy, the Curriculum Framework and the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Strategy). Within this clearly articulated direction, much has been achieved to strengthen the capacity of teachers, school principals and other key education staff to deliver good-quality education. This was made possible through key professional development programmes, such as Leading for the Future and Core Knowledge, Skills and Competences for Strategic Support Staff, and School-Based Teacher Development, programmes I and II. Austerity measures in 2015 led to larger class sizes in UNRWA schools for the 2015/16 school year. The Agency is monitoring the situation, as it is likely that, if the measures continue to be necessary, they will have a negative impact on the performance of the education system and gains made through the reform may be lost
- The innovative education in emergencies approach has enabled children in the Syrian Arab Republic to continue their education and supported those that transitioned to UNRWA schools in Jordan and Lebanon
- 42 schools or extensions were rehabilitated or in the process of being rehabilitated

## C. Goal 3
## A decent standard of living

72. UNRWA aims to achieve the human development goal of ensuring that Palestine refugees enjoy a decent standard of living through interventions by its relief and social services programme, microfinance programme and infrastructure and camp improvement programme, in collaboration with host countries and national and international partners.

73. Of 255,445 Palestine refugees who received assistance under the social safety net programme in 2015, 147,087, or 58 per cent, were identified as abjectly poor under a proxy means testing formula that assesses essential characteristics to identify and prioritize the poorest of the poor.[17] Of the 147,087 recipients, 54 per cent were women, 38 per cent had a registered disability and 37 per cent lived in camps.

74. The Department of Relief and Social Services preserved 5,716,134 refugee records through the refugee registration information system and is taking steps towards incorporating emergency and protection elements into its programming.

[17] An additional 35,522 benefited under the social safety net programme in the Syrian Arab Republic. However, owing to the emergency situation, poverty levels could not be assessed through the proxy means testing formula.

75. The education programme contributes to this human development goal by increasing employability through its technical and vocational education and training programme. In 2015, Agency-wide employment rates for 2014 graduates improved considerably, owing to updated courses, enhanced instructor capacity, strengthened private sector partnerships, graduate referral systems and advocacy, improved follow-up and tracking of graduates, and enhanced employer involvement.

76. The microfinance programme financed 38,193 loans valued at $37.89 million in 2015. Programme implementation remained a challenge in the Syrian Arab Republic and Gaza, owing to the restricted movement of people and supplies, limited business opportunities and high rates of unemployment.

77. Interventions under the infrastructure and camp improvement programme prioritized families classified as absolutely or abjectly poor in Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and the West Bank. In addition, work was initiated on 83 facilities, including schools, health centres and vocational training and community development centres, of which 52 were completed, while work on solid waste disposal, drainage and water and sewerage systems was carried out to prevent the spread of diseases, without prejudice to the Agency's position concerning the responsibility of host authorities to administer the camps. In Gaza, under emergency assistance, more than 36,000 families benefited from UNRWA shelter repair, construction and reconstruction programming. In Nahr el-Bared, Lebanon, 833 shelters were rehabilitated.

**Strategic objective 7**
**To reduce abject poverty**

| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicator of achievement* | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Unit of measure* | *Percentage* |
| | | | *All fields of operations* |
| Increased ability of abjectly poor individuals to meet their basic food needs | Percentage of abjectly poor among beneficiaries of the UNRWA social safety net | Baseline (2015) | 55.3 |
| | | Target (2015) | 45.5 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 57.6[a] |

[a] Excluding the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Outputs**

- An average of 290,967 individuals received quarterly food aid and cash subsidies (Gaza and the Syrian Arab Republic only received food aid). By focusing on the abjectly poor, the social safety net programme continued to prioritize the needs of the poorest of the poor

**Strategic objective 8**
**To mitigate the immediate effects of emergencies on individuals**

| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicator of achievement* | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Unit of measure* | *Number* |
| Reduce impact of family financial crisis | Number of Palestine refugees provided with cash or food assistance | Baseline (2015) | 1 363 118 |
| | | Target (2015) | 1 475 600 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 1 372 245 |

**Outputs**

- Under emergency funding, food assistance was provided to 801,265 persons in Gaza, 48,596 in the West Bank, 466,502 in the Syrian Arab Republic, 41,882 in Lebanon and 13,600 in Jordan. In addition, job opportunities were provided to 24,092 refugees across the occupied Palestinian territory

**Strategic objective 9**
**To provide inclusive financial services and access to credit**

| | | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicators of achievement* | *Unit of measure* | *Number (in millions of United States dollars)* |
| Increased provision of financial services | (a) Number of loans disbursed | Baseline (2015) | 28 469 |
| | | Target (2015) | 44 824 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 38 193[a] |
| | (b) Value of loans disbursed | Baseline (2015) | 33 659 273 |
| | | Target (2015) | 47 665 035 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 37 898 797[a] |

[a] Excluding Lebanon, as an inhospitable regulatory environment does not allow the programme to operate.

**Outputs**

- 13,189 loans, valued at $17.2 million (more than 45 per cent of total loans), were extended to Palestine refugees
- 14,859 loans, valued at $11,478,475, were disbursed to women, of which 4,948 were extended to women refugees (valued at $4,579,534). For the overall programme, this marked a 14.3 per cent growth in outreach compared with 2014
- 11,188 loans, valued at $10,813,409, were disbursed to youth, of which 3,351 ($3,745,157), or 30 per cent, were extended to young refugees

**Strategic objective 10**
**To improve employability**

| | | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicators of achievement* | *Unit of measure* | *Percentage* |
| Improved market responsiveness of educational science facilities and vocational training centres | (a) Employment rates for male graduates within 12 months of graduation | Baseline (2015) | 72.1 |
| | | Target (2015) | 87.8 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 80.14[a] |
| | (b) Employment rates for female graduates within 12 months of graduation | Baseline (2015) | 62.94 |
| | | Target (2015) | 71.3 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 77.26[b] |

[a] The value including the Syrian Arab Republic is 79.66
[b] The value including Syrian Arab Republic is 76.06.

**Outputs**

- Training in technical and vocational skills was provided to 7,234 students, of whom 42.8 per cent were women
- In 2015, Agency-wide employment rates for both male and female graduates of technical and vocational education and training increased. For males, the employment rate increased by approximately 8 per cent, while for females it increased from 62.94 to 77.26 per cent (excluding the Syrian Arab Republic)
- An improved electronic placement and career guidance electronic system was implemented to provide the programme with more accurate and timely statistical information with regard to graduate employment, among other data

**Strategic objective 11**
**To improve the urban environment through sustainable camp development and upgrading of substandard infrastructure and accommodation**

| | | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicator of achievement* | *Unit of measure* | *Number* |
| Sustained camp development and upgraded substandard infrastructure and accommodation | Number of refugee families living in substandard shelters that have improved living conditions (excluding emergency shelters in Gaza) | Baseline (2015) | 1 341 |
| | | Target (2015) | 10 889 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 1 040[a] |

[a] Excluding the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Outputs**

- 1,040 families benefited from rehabilitated shelters (excluding emergency cases)
- 1 camp improvement plan developed and a further two in progress
- Work was initiated on 83 facilities, of which 52 were completed

## D. Goal 4
## Human rights enjoyed to the fullest

78. UNRWA aims to ensure that Palestine refugees enjoy human rights to the fullest extent possible, internally by providing protection in and through its service delivery, and externally by promoting greater respect for international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law. Palestine refugees face major protection challenges owing to, in particular, the lack of a just and durable solution to their plight, the ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, almost 50 years of occupation in the occupied Palestinian territory, an upsurge of violence in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the blockade in Gaza and a precarious legal status in some host countries.

79. In 2015, UNRWA made further progress in developing the Agency's protection framework and function. In order to integrate the different aspects of the Agency's protection work, preparations were undertaken to establish a Protection Division at headquarters, in early 2016. Protection/Operations Support Officer teams were also

established in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, with the result that all UNRWA field offices now have dedicated protection staff for the first time in the Agency's history.

80. Building on the existing protection policy at UNRWA, a child protection framework was developed and efforts were undertaken to strengthen a case management approach, including through the piloting of a protection information management system and the development of guidelines and tools.

81. Reviews conducted to measure the implementation rate of protection audits recommendations made in 2014 recorded a 49 per cent overall rate of compliance with UNRWA protection standards. As a result of those reviews, it was also found that, overall, 74 per cent of the recommendations were either partially or fully implemented.

82. UNRWA continued to consolidate its multisectoral approach to prevent and respond to gender-based violence with referral systems further developed across the Agency. The main services accessed were psychosocial support and legal aid. The Agency also continued to work on reducing the gender gaps and addressing gender-related vulnerabilities in the services provided to refugees. In Gaza, for example, women's access to housing rights improved by having wives co-sign with their husbands before the handover of a housing unit.

83. UNRWA worked to integrate a disability dimension in its programming. The improved accessibility of UNRWA facilities for persons with disabilities was a priority, with guidance developed on accessibility for schools and health centres. Recommendations were also made on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in poverty and relief assistance.

84. To promote greater respect for Palestine refugee rights, UNRWA continued to document alleged violations of international law and raise identified concerns with relevant duty bearers through private and public advocacy. In 2015, advocacy interventions with relevant authorities elicited a 36 per cent positive response rate. This outcome should, however, be viewed in the context of a worsening protection situation in many fields of operations, which has made this work more challenging.

85. UNRWA continued to engage with the international human rights system, providing inputs to a range of United Nations human rights mechanisms and reports of the Secretary-General relevant to Palestine refugees. UNRWA also engaged with a number of European Union human rights institutions and helped to facilitate the participation of refugees to present their protection concerns at a high-level United Nations conference, in New York, to mark the celebration of "UNRWA at 65: sustaining human development and protecting rights of Palestine refugees".

**Strategic objective 12**
**To ensure service delivery meets the protection needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups**

| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicators of achievement* | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Unit of measure* | *Percentage* |
| Improved conformity of service delivery to international standards, in particular protection standards | (a) Degree of compliance with UNRWA protection standards | Baseline (2015) | 47 |
| | | Target (2015) | 60 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 49 |
| | (b) Percentage of education staff who successfully completed the human rights, conflict resolution and tolerance training programme | Baseline (2015) | – |
| | | Target (2015) | 2 500 |
| | | Actual (2015) | – |

**Strategic objective 13**
**To safeguard and advance the rights of Palestine refugees by promoting respect for human rights, international humanitarian law and international refugee law**

| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicator of achievement* | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Unit of measure* | *Percentage* |
| Improved programmes and policies regarding protection | Percentage of protection issues eliciting positive responses from authorities | Baseline (2015) | 40.0 |
| | | Target (2015) | 44.8 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 36.0 |

**Outputs**

- 4,866 UNRWA staff trained on protection
- 5,006 protection cases identified in 2015, with 85 per cent responded to
- 3,411 gender-based violence survivors identified, who accessed 5,301 services
- 1,046 child protection cases identified and responded to
- Legal counselling and advisory services provided to 12,058 refugees
- 574 advocacy interventions conducted
- 469 protection incidents of alleged violations of international law documented
- 574 advocacy interventions organized and 40 formal letters submitted to duty bearers
- 7 submissions to United Nations human rights mechanisms

**Strategic objective 14**
**To strengthen refugee capacity to formulate and implement sustainable social services in their communities**

| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicator of achievement* | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Unit of measure* | *Percentage* |
| Refugees' capacity to formulate and implement sustainable social services in their communities | Number of partnerships established with UNRWA community-based organizations[a] | Baseline (2013) | – |
| | | Target (2014) | 14 |
| | | Actual (2014) | 7 |

[a] This indicator replaces "Percentage of community-based organizations improving their level of performance in financial management, service delivery and governance", upon which UNRWA no longer reports.

**Output**

- A combined 36 partnerships were established in Gaza, Lebanon and the West Bank to implement projects serving the poor and vulnerable, empowering women and, ultimately, making a positive impact on the lives of refugees

**Strategic objective 15**
**To ensure Palestine refugee registration and eligibility for UNRWA services are carried out in accordance with relevant international standards**

| *Expected accomplishment* | *Indicator of achievement* | *Measurement* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Unit of measure* | *Percentage* |
| Improved access to registration | Percentage of new applicants meeting UNRWA standards | Baseline (2015) | 90 |
| | | Target (2015) | 100 |
| | | Actual (2015) | 91.7[a] |

[a] Including the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Output**

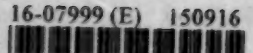
- The refugee registration information system continued to facilitate the application of the UNRWA consolidated eligibility and registration instructions and significantly improved the ability of UNRWA to monitor transactions and processes and, ultimately, serve refugees in a more dignified and efficient way

**Endnote**

86. UNRWA was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 302 (IV) of December 1949. The Agency is a subsidiary body of the Assembly and became operational on 1 May 1950, responding to the needs of about 750,000 Palestine refugees. It is one of the largest United Nations programmes, with a population of 5.24 million registered Palestine refugees under its mandate at the end of 2015, and around 30,000 staff. Palestine refugees are defined as "persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period of 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict" and include descendants through the male line.

87. The mission of the Agency is to assist Palestine refugees in achieving their full potential in human development until a durable and just solution is found to the refugee issue. The Agency fulfils its humanitarian and human development mandate by providing protection and essential services to Palestine refugees in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Its services include basic and, in Lebanon, secondary education, comprehensive primary health care, emergency relief, social interventions, microfinance, shelter and infrastructural support.

16-07999 (E) 150916



Please recycle